

WAS IT A LOST DAY?

AND OTHER STORIES.

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By KATHARINE JENKINS.





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STORIES

BY

KATHARINE JENKINS.







# STORIES

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Was it a Lost Day?	Hilda.
The New Postmaster.	The Bridal Bouquet.
The Whim of a Nobleman.	The Light Blue Tea Gown.
After Many Years.	The Lullaby.
What the Beach Birds Know.	The Iron Cross.
Aunt Sarah's Wedding Boots.	The Prize Chrysanthemums.
The After-glow. An Etching.	



BALTIMORE

JOHN MURPHY & CO.

(METROPOLITAN PRESS.)

1892

A simple, elegant handwritten flourish or signature mark located at the bottom center of the page.



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“Human hearts remain unchanged: the sorrow and  
the sin,  
The loves and hopes and fears of old, are to our  
own akin;  
And if, in tales our fathers told, the songs our  
mothers sung,  
Tradition wears a snowy beard, Romance is  
always young.”

Whittier.







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WAS IT A LOST DAY?







## WAS IT A LOST DAY?

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**T**HE living room of an old farm house. A long low room, with great beams black with time, interlaced with a fretwork of lighter wood, a large chimney-place with seats on either side, and on the ponderous wood-work carved in old English lettering this inscription:—

“ . . . . The Grace of Heaven  
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,  
Enwheel thee round.”

Four high narrow windows with small diamond-shaped panes lit the room, two at the end and one on either side of the chimney-place. The floor for several feet around the fireside was of tiles, kept shining by that best of cleaners—daily use. The rest of the flooring was of hard dark wood brightened



here and there by strips of gay rag carpet and a couple of skin rugs.

The dullness of the room was relieved by the coloring of a few pictures on the walls, by the streaks of bright sunshine streaming in the narrow windows, by the glow from the wood fire almost lost as it was in the huge chimney, but above all by the presence of Lucy Lennox, the daughter of the house.

She had placed her spinning-wheel almost in the centre of the room, not too far from the fire to escape its warmth, nor so near that the glare would scorch her sweet face. Her back was towards the window, and the sun-rays, loving all things bright, fell on her head and shoulders, kissing the refractory ringlets, forming a halo around the slight form, and making the fine flax on the distaff look like spun gold.

Lucy Lennox was indeed a bright bit of human nature for the sturdy old sun to select for his loving attentions, for though she had gone through much sorrow and had walked hand in hand with trouble and pain, her heart was tender and full of ready sympathy for all in distress, her hand ever ready to help, and her face and eyes, though they bore the



impress of past grief were so calm and full of peace that to look at her gave those who were world-weary a feeling of rest. Her eyes were the bluest of blue—"a bit of Heaven caught by Mother Nature" her father used to say; and her voice was so soft and low, with such a lurking suspicion of mischief in it, and yet so tender, that it was music even to the rudest and roughest nature.

When she was old she used to say that the sweetest compliment she ever received was from a Quaker lady.

"My dear," said the old lady, "if I was ill I should love to have thee with me, thy voice is so sweet, and thy step so light."

Out yonder on the hill-side back of the house lay the family burying-ground, the gateway marked by two Lombardy poplars that stood tall and straight, as if on guard. The latest grave made there was five years before in 1776, when Lucy's father gave up his life for his country in one of the battles in the South under the gallant Colonel Moultrie. Although not killed outright on the battle-field, he could really be said to have given his life, for he was wounded unto death. Tenderly his comrades bore him home to his wife and children, and though he lay in intense



suffering many weeks, his soldier spirit never left him, and he died as he had lived—a hero.

Lying on the porch he would watch eagerly for any messenger who might perchance bring him news of the conflict still raging. When he heard of the downfall of the English at Charleston, he called Lucy, and bade her read him that most heroic of hymns—the Cantic of Moses.

“Who is like to Thee among the strong, O Lord! who is like to Thee!” he murmured.

When at last the news came that the yoke was thrown off, and our country declared free, listening with dilated eyes to the thrilling narration of how the Declaration had been drawn up and signed, how the old bell pealed forth the glad tidings to the anxious people, forgetful of his wounds and weakness, he raised himself up, and with a voice strong with joy, sang the stirring refrain from the old hymn,

“Jehovah hath conquered! His people are free!”

Falling back on his pillows, he again murmured, “His people are free!” and his courageous soul went forth full of thanksgiving to the Divine Protector of his beloved country.



Do we ever stop to think of the brave men and women who like Robert Lennox, with the love of God and of country in their hearts, giving up home and life, suffering the hardships and privations of war, enduring all, that the foundation might be laid for our prosperity? Do we not owe them much? Ah! as time elapses I fear we grow forgetful and ungrateful, and accept our luxuries with no thought of the noble fearlessness which purchased our freedom—our right to advance as a nation.

The five years which had elapsed since the death of Robert Lennox had been hard ones for his family. But now the grey dawn of uncertainty which had hung like a pall over the New Republic had begun to lift; indeed, the sun of prosperity had risen, and Mrs. Lennox and her three children rejoiced in the activity which came with the day of freedom.

The sons had developed under the hardships into stirring, active men, and their one ambition was to smooth the pathway of life's decline for their beloved mother.

The old tannery, standing idle so long, was once more a scene of activity, the home farm yielding profitably, and the house itself a picture of comfort



and happiness under the gentle rule of the dear mother and Lucy.

Lucy was just twenty, and more than one suitor, glad to lay down the firelock and sabre, would have been willing to employ Cupid's darts. . . . But no, Lucy had no thought but for home and mother, she said.

But Lucy, why are you so dreamy this afternoon, and how is it that the flax breaks so often in your usually steady hand? . . . Lost in dreams, Lucy was thinking of handsome Charles Worthington who had come so often of late to see her brothers on business. It was very peculiar business which never could be consummated except by a visit to the house, a full half mile from the tan-yards.

"Would he come this evening," thought Lucy. The spinning-wheel went round and round, but Oh! Lucy, careless Lucy, the flax is all in a tangle—lost irrevocably in love's meshes.

A shadow crossed the sunlight—Lucy gave a start of delight—but instead of the object of her thoughts, a most comical old negro stood before her in a broad grin.

"Why, Jim, is that you? Where did you come from?"



“Yes, Miss Lucy, dat’s me. An’ yo’ ma says won’t you please ’tend to fixin’ su’tthin’ nice for tea. Marsa’ Harry’s done said as he is gwine to brung a gent’man along home.”

Important business! How grand it sounds, and how much ground it covers. I have known whole days to be spent in pleasure-seeking under the guise of important business. So it was with Charles Worthington. He did indeed have business with the Lennox brothers, but after the dry, though profitable conferences about hides and bark, was it absolutely necessary for the closing of a business interview that a short cut be taken across the fields towards the farm-house, that his horse be tied to the venerable old oak tree at the garden gate, to say nothing of the pleasant chat with gentle Lucy?

It was the same old story ever new to every pair of young hearts. Old Father Time has made many changes in this wise old world,—science has done much—made rapid and prodigious strides towards effecting grand results. Art and labor have been made to clasp hands in a loving truce, and salute with cordiality beauty which has been forced to become the bride of necessity. Many things have



been accomplished, but Cupid, happy elf! has played with love in his own wilful way—nay, it even has been said that he still uses the same old bow and arrow as in the days when love was young. Can we blame the merry sprite for not keeping abreast of the times when his victims have never yet found out that he is ever using the same old darts?

Surely Charles and Lucy had no fault to find with him. They were very happy, and was it not very delightful that business should force Charles to take the long ride from town three times a week? . . . All this was long years ago; how is it that the pretty picture of their love-making has not faded into the night of the past?

“A sunny face hath holy grace to woo the sun forever,”—perhaps that is why their story still lives in the bright sunlight of the present.

But they have left a token behind them—only a quaint little ring it is true, but within the magic of its tiny circle, their story is held, and hidden deep in the heart of the ruby the flame of their love burns as bright as in days of old.

Charles and Lucy had been engaged some months, and the wedding was to take place in the early Fall;



but it was only Spring now, and all Summer lay before them, offering many days of innocent pleasure to the happy lovers. The pretext of business had long since been given up, indeed, Charles was already as a son of the house, and now he was spending most of his time at the Lennox farm. Lucy had much to do. Courting could not be the idle amusement then that it is in our times. Lucy must spin, or where would she get her linen? or where the wool for her best dress?—for home-spun was the best even for a bride in those early years of our independence.

One bright, glorious day when all nature seemed on a holiday, Charles begged Lucy to be idle just for once and come with him for a ramble among the fresh beauties of the woods. Who could withstand such a plea?

“There are many days on which I can spin, and perhaps a rainy spell may come, and then I can more than make up this lost day,” said Lucy, which shows that she was of a hopeful nature and expected to make hay even when the sun was not shining.

Happy day! A day lost, but a jewel found!

If Lucy had kept at her work that fair June day,



I would never perhaps have seen this quaint ring, nor you have heard their story.

Out into the sunshine went this happy pair of lovers, over the meadows, through the woods, chasing first this butterfly, stopping to peep at a bird's nest, tenderly picking up one weak birdling which had fallen to the ground while the mother bird had flown away—laughing and singing with all the happy freedom of youth. Finally, when they came to the arm of the river which skirted the farm, Lucy declared she was tired.

She seated herself on a fallen tree and Charles threw himself on the soft earth at her side. Looking up into Lucy's face, he sang this tender bit of song.

“As brooks in sunny meadows run  
So may thy days pass, gentle one;  
As tranquil rivers to the sea,  
Thy years flow towards eternity.”

I do not know what Lucy would have said to this pretty wish expressed so lovingly, but just at that moment her eyes caught the sparkle of a bright stone, and almost tumbling over Charles she ran to the river's edge to snatch the treasure ere the force of the water had washed it beyond her reach.



“What is it, dearest?”

“O Charles, such a beautiful stone! Do catch it! There! There! O! I am so much obliged!” as Charles at the risk of breaking his neck reached down and caught the shining pebble, and handed it to Lucy.

And this was the reward of a lost day. . . . . A beautiful, deep red ruby, washed by the storms and winds from its home beyond the far distant sea, lying hid, perhaps for centuries, in this quiet nook, and started again on its journeyings by some trick of the fickle water-sprite.

But no; it had found its home. After the lapidary had burnished away the crusts which time had formed over its bright, burning heart, Charles had it set in a quaint little flat ring, and many happy years it spent on the slender finger of Mistress Charles Worthington, losing nothing of its lustre as the years flew by, and recalling for her always the recollection of a happy, idle day.

I now possess this ruby ring, and as I gaze at it the past and present unite within its tiny circle, and deep in the heart of the ruby I seem ever to see the gentlest of my friends, fair Lucy.







THE NEW POSTMASTER.







## THE NEW POSTMASTER.

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"Only a little village street,  
Lying along a mountain side."—*H. Hunt.*

**L**EAVING the railroad and its conveniences behind and turning one's horses due northwest, by keeping in the well-worn pike for five or six miles one comes at last to Coatesville. Hidden as it is in the heart of the Blue Mountains, and veiled in the charitable mist which envelopes that picturesque chain in a soft weirdness, it has all the appearance of a phantom town clothed in the grave, tender blue haze.

Looking down on Coatesville from the mountain road, one is tempted to envy its quiet repose, its freedom from the bustle and agitation of a city. Here, at least, we may find rest and peace. Released



from the noise and contention of the world, our hearts with the poet cry out in glad thanksgiving,

“Life’s burdens fall, its discords cease,  
I lapse into a glad release  
Of Nature’s own exceeding peace.”

But when we descend, we find our mistake, for quiet as Coatesville looks, it holds human hearts enough to make or mar a little world of hope, ambition, envy and contention.

In the fall of 187—, it was the scene of a veritable “tempest in a tea-cup.” For twenty years and more Jacob Hiss had held the gratifying office of Postmaster. It just suited his tastes, and he considered himself the one person fitted for the duty. Being of a meditative turn of mind, it was very pleasant to him to dream over the few letters and packages which passed through his hands during the first fifteen years of his holding the office.

People were in no hurry in that remote mountain region, life was not the scramble for recognition and place it has since become, and communication with the outer world was of small importance. But within the last decade, a keen-eyed visitor from a



city had noted the wasted force of a turbulent stream as it grumbled and scolded down the mountain side. A large mill was the result. Another had found iron ore. Corps of engineers sprung to life, and the astonished people heard their mountain side, which they had looked on as being only masses of rock, proclaimed a mine of wealth. Still another innovation came. Orchards were planted in the valleys skirting the base of the mountains, and with these came the necessity for box factories. With the millers, engineers and enterprising fruit growers came a long list of needs and requirements, the supplying of which induced still another stranger to settle in the quiet town of Coatesville.

Old Jacob's life was now one of misery, and he had little time to exercise his heretofore much enjoyed prerogatives. Many a tempting package passed through his hands before he had time to meditate upon, if not investigate its contents. And as for postals—he had scarcely time to spell out one or two, when the man from the mill would be there to demand his mail.

“Here, old slow-coach, give us the mail. I’m a hustler, I am,” he would say defiantly.



Poor old Jacob would gaze at the speaker mildly, remove his pipe from his mouth, give a hitch to his ample trousers, whose whole responsibility in life depended on the frail support of one button attached to unique style of suspender which Jacob called a "gallus," and then deliberately count out the papers and letters with a slow precision distracting to one of warmer blood.

He was a firm believer in the saying that "time was made for slaves."

"What's the use of all this fuss?" he would ask.

"Can't you hurry up?" the newcomer would exclaim.

"Wall, I'll *be*!" nobody ever new what, for he never got any further in the ejaculation.

On this day when he drawled out his usual, "I'll *be*!" the man from the mill, exasperated by his lazy indifference to the impatience of a busy man, snarled out:

"Turned out of office, if you don't look out."

Old Jacob fell back aghast.

"Turned out of office! you dasn't!" he quavered.

But the man was on his horse and off, little dreaming of the storm his threat had raised.



Business increased, but in the midst of all the bustle of the new thriving mountain town, Jacob held firmly to his old time, aggravating customs. A change was coming however, apparent to all save himself. The low rumblings of discontent had gathered force, till they were a veritable clash of long suppressed discord, and over Jacob's unsuspecting head hung a second sword of Damocles. Unknown to him a petition had been drawn up and signed by all the newcomers in the neighborhood and by some of the mountaineers, begging his removal, and even going so far as to name his successor. This was sent to the U. S. Post-office, and the originators were anxiously awaiting the result. It was natural that the busy capitalist should desire a young, active man to mete out to them the favors of the post, but that the simple mountain people should turn on their life-long friend and Postmaster seems almost strange.

The little town had caught the infection of progress, especially the younger men, and with the thoughtlessness of youth, they forgot the possible feelings of an old man, and loudly joined in the chorus of "better service."



To me there is something pathetic in the crowding out or removal of an old man grown grey in a position, be he efficient or otherwise; but in this rapid nineteenth century there is no time for sentiment, for this is preëminently the age of ingratitude, and the era of the young.

\* \* \* \* \*

A spirit of discontent had taken possession of Clementina Browne and her brother Jarvis. At least it had seized upon Clementina, and being of a masterful disposition and accustomed to lead Jarvis, she easily persuaded him that he was also desirous of change. So the two left the culture and refinement of Boston and came down to seek adventure and fortune in the heart of the Blue Mountains. Reverses had come to the Browne family, and Jarvis who was a man of sterling qualities, even though he bowed to the iron will of Clementina, hearing of the need of a general store in Coatesville, determined to thrust aside his dilettante mode of life and invest the small sum of money he had at his command, and make the bold venture of turning shopkeeper in a mountainous district. Clementina generously added



her portion to the enterprise, and the resolve once formed, these two daring young Bostonians threw themselves into the work with the same zest which had characterized their pursuit of pleasure in palmier days.

With Jarvis it was all business, and the success which attended his efforts amply rewarded him for the sacrifices he made.

In Clementina's case it was a sort of ennui which made her desirous of doing something out of the common. Having never been a success in society, she found herself approaching the dread age of twenty-five with no prospect of the goal of matrimony being reached. So she resolved that as she could not be a social success she would, at least, make a name for herself, and find recognition for the good she had wrought among the benighted people of the mountains. Philanthropic ideas of all sorts floated through her small head. It must be confessed that Jarvis would have greatly preferred that his sister had remained at home, and he make the venture alone. Much breath and time were wasted in trying to dissuade her from her purpose; but it was all of no avail, for Clementina Browne once resolved could not be turned.



So all the journey down Jarvis listened to the unfolding of wondrous plans for the missionary work of refining and developing the women of the Blue Mountains. She did not confine herself to Coatesville. Not at all—the entire region was to come under her large-hearted influence. She was going to institute a species of Chatauquan Club, she being head and sole directress, of course, a singing class, a designing and free-hand drawing school, and she even had visions of a debating club for the men, in time.

“I hope it will all turn out as you propose, Clem,” said Jarvis for about the fiftieth time.

“Of course it will,” said this strong minded young lady, “I have never been crossed in my life. *All* my undertakings succeed. Why not these?”

The night they arrived, and for some time after, they had rooms at the “Mountain House,” a miserable, wayside hostelry, but the only inn or boarding place the village afforded.

Clementina in her dark blue tailor-made traveling costume was a revelation to the servant-maid of the house, and the maid’s brusque manner filled Clem-



entina with ecstatic delight. Here indeed was a field for the diffusion of her overcharged fund of knowledge. Poking her head in the door the first morning, without even knocking, the girl asked :

“ Be you’un a goin’ to make yor’un bed ? ”

Clementina’s lorgnette was raised in an instant, and in a clear, high-pitched, instructive tone, she replied :

“ Young woman, it is bad form for you to express yourself in such a manner. You should be more careful.”

The girl grinned stupidly.

“ I aint sade nothin’ ’bout yo’ form or ’bout the ’xpress. I jes’ axed, be you’un a goin’ to make up yo’rn bed, ’cause ef yo’un *aint*, I *is*.”

This had been some two years before the resolution to depose old Jacob had taken active form. Jarvis Browne’s store was successful beyond his wildest hopes, and he firmly believed it was all due to advertising. He had brought adventurous methods with him from civilization. Hardly a rock for miles around, or a fence corner but had been



adorned or defaced, as the fancy strikes you, with red and black letters :

“GO TO THE BOSTON STORE.

STRICT ATTENTION TO BUSINESS.

FINE GOODS.

FAIR PRICES.

THEREFORE—GO TO THE BOSTON STORE.”

After many months of futile efforts Clementina acknowledged that her mission was a failure, and humbled by the shipwreck of her darling schemes against the rocks of mountain prejudice and ignorance, she relinquished all hope of doing something extraordinary and begged Jarvis to allow her to assist him in the store. Book-keeping was among the many accomplishments she had mastered at the high school, and bent on being useful, she established herself in an office of her own devising at one end of Jarvis' store.

Poor Jarvis! He was fond of his sister and admired her many talents, but with all his heart he wished her back on the New England coast. He had left his heart in the safe keeping of a dark-eyed



maiden up North, who had loyally promised to be faithful and true, and was willing even to give up the luxuries of Boston and share his mountain home, if he should be successful.

Success had come, but, "could any fair minded man subject his wife to Clementina's eccentricities?" he asked himself.

In justice I must say that Clementina was totally ignorant of Jarvis' thoughts and hopes, and had she known them would have been the first to abdicate in favor of his wife. With all her queer notions and impracticable ideas she was the soul of generosity, and her love for Jarvis was so great that any sacrifice would be small to her strong nature if his happiness was at stake.

In spite of his shrewdness and keen business sense, Jarvis was a bit of a coward, or else he would have taken his sister into his confidence. I think she suspected the state of affairs after a while, for she was too shrewd not to see that something lay behind the interchange of so many letters, books, boxes of ferns, mountain peaches, and every variety of tangible and intangible expression of interest in each other's welfare.



She ruled the store and the customers with a rod of iron. Nature had fashioned her in a pleasing mould, but over-culture, as with many a fair fruit, had forced away the sweetness indigenous to her disposition in its natural state. An overweening sense of the "fitness of things" characterized her; she could condone no breach of etiquette, and a quick asperity of manner distorted the covering of a really good heart.

The men were afraid of her, and rough and bold as they were quailed under her decisive,

"Gentlemen, there are cuspidors for your use."

The women, less timorous, laughed, though they all admired her, and her influence was perceptible in their improved appearance, and in the cleanliness of their houses.

Her accounts were a monument to the book-keeping department of the Boston high school, and though she

"Wrote in a hand-writing clerky,  
And spoke with an emphasis jerky,"

and unconsciously debarred Jarvis from the realization of the dearest wish of his life, she was of real



practical use, and did much towards advancing the success of the Boston store.

Such were Clementina and Jarvis Browne, and because they were so successful, the store so convenient, the promoters of the scheme for turning old Jacob Hiss out of office named Jarvis Browne as the candidate for the position of new Postmaster.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Turning over the mail one morning as it poured from the official bag, old Jacob came across a formidable missive addressed to himself. Breaking the seals with trembling hands he beheld a formal notice of dismissal from office.

Mother Nature was kind to the old servant, more kind than those who had been his associates so long, for when the various men assembled to receive the morning's mail, old Jacob was found unconscious with the fatal document in his hand. The unfeeling men who had been his silent enemies were somewhat abashed at first, but when they found it was only a simple stroke of paralysis and that he was not going to die, they congratulated themselves on the neat turn the overcoming of the difficulty had



taken. They had one and all dreaded the sight of old Jacob and the sound of his tongue, for they were well aware that he would not relinquish his beloved rights without a struggle.

It was many weeks before old Jacob Hiss was seen on the sunny mountain street, and in the meantime Jarvis had assumed his new duties, the accessories of the Post-office been moved to his store, and all things were working to the satisfaction of the malcontents.

In this time of Jacob's illness Clementina's true character shone out. To the great chagrin of Jarvis she gave her whole time and attention to restoring Jacob to life. Jarvis considered that her action reflected on him, as if in nursing the old man she gave open expression to her disapproval of his appointment. This, however, was not so, though the brother and sister came nearer to an open rupture than ever in their life before. Clementina had become necessary for the smooth running of the store, but with her stern puritanical sense of justice she considered that she owed it to Jacob to leave everything and nurse him. Jarvis was the means of bringing on this illness; his sister should do all in her power to relieve its tedium.



“Can’t you realize, Jarvis, that your success means Jacob’s failure?” she asked.

All that was best in her sprung to life in those silent watches. When Jacob was mending, he and Clementina grew to be the dearest of friends. The intercourse between the uncouth old man and the cultured woman wrought great good in each by overcoming lifelong prejudices. When Jacob was convalescent Clementina went back to her desk, softened and sweetened by womanly duties.

Book-keeping and shop-minding had grown distasteful, but a lurking pride kept her resolution alive to carve out her own fortune. Jarvis was absorbed in his new work, and already many changes were in force. Three mails a day where there had once been only one, individual letter-boxes, even a special delivery to the mills and mines, and with these evidences of advancement more and more customers at the Boston store.

It was pathetic to see old Jacob. Force of habit drew him to the store when the mail came in. His hands would tremble nervously and his eyes grow strangely bright as he saw alien hands opening those leather bags which he had regarded as his own.



Jarvis resented his hanging around. The hungry look in the old man's face gave him a guilty feeling.

The simple old man, untaught as he was, divined Jarvis' thoughts.

"Ye musn't feel bad 'bout me a hangin' 'round them bags, Mister Browne. Ye see they is an old man's love. I kinder can't git 'long without seein' 'em, jes' as ef they wus my gal, ye know."

But Jarvis was rude and unkind, and would not humor the old man's whim.

"You believe in rotation in office, don't you?" he asked one day.

"Wal, yes, Mister Browne, I reckon I do. I doant 'xactly know what it means, but I b'lieve in all the laws of the United States!" answered Jacob loyally.

"Yes.

'You said the same: and are you discontent

With laws to which you give your own assent?'"

quoted Jarvis with stinging sarcasm.

"Jarvis, I am ashamed of you!" cried Clementina, bursting into tears. "I did not think you could be so cruel."



That night the brother and sister had a long talk in which Clementina made Jarvis confess his long deferred hopes, and she informed him of her determination to return home.

"I am weary of being something uncommon, Jarvis. I am going home to lead a woman's natural life," she said smilingly.

"By Jove ! Clem, you look a beauty to-night ! Life in the mountains has awakened your latent charms."

And so it was all arranged. Jarvis was to go home and marry Mabel, and while he was gone Clementina would run the business and prepare the house for the reception of the bride. After that she was to retire into private life.

"I may then rest on my laurels," she said.

The next morning after all signs of Post-office business had disappeared, old Jacob stood at the store door, a bundle in his hand and an old knapsack over his shoulders.

"Miss Clementiny, I hev jes' come to say good-bye. Ye see I couldn't be happy without them mail bags, an' Mister Jarvis doan't like me a hangin' 'round, so I jes' made up my min' to clear



out. I hev' a sister on t'other side of mounting, so I'll jes' go long and stay with her a spell."

It was seldom Jacob made so long a speech.

Clementina threw her arms around the old man's neck and burst into demonstrative ejaculations of love and distress. The woman of culture was lost in the new found sweetness of friendship. Jarvis preserved a dignified mien.

"Clementina was making a fool of herself," was his mental reservation.

"Mister Browne, I doant bear ye no gredge, no gredge, an' I hope when ye git old ye wont be in nobody's way. Good bye, Miss Clermentiny, God bless ye!"

The brother and sister stood watching the old man. Up and up the rough, uneven street he climbed, past the houses, past the Mill. Up and up, his steps more feeble and tottering under his burden of years and misfortune.

On and on, till he was lost in the tender blue mist of his native mountains.



THE WHIM OF A NOBLEMAN.







## THE WHIM OF A NOBLEMAN.

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**A**BOUT thirty miles north of the city of Gratz, Austria, there is a rich valley hemmed in by the towering peaks of the Styrian Alps. Through this valley runs the broad and rapid river Muhr, and by its sparkling waters a well-worn road wends its way at the foot of the mountains.

High up on the edge of one of the most towering precipices hangs the ruins of what was once a noble castle. The shattered walls and turrets seem set in the sky, and the clouds hang protectingly around the deserted spot. Vines and mosses grow over the crumbling stones, trees have sprung up within the walls, and the lacings of the twisted tree-roots and the embracing arms of the vines are all that hold the ruins together. It was a veritable cloud-capped "castle in the air" in its palmy days—now an awe-



inspiring ruin, majestic in its desolation. But a hundred and fifty years ago it was teeming with life, the scene of all that makes life dear, the centre of home-happiness, love, pure and innocent enjoyment, the resort of the wisest and best of the land. Now, a stranger traveling along the river-skirted road may perchance stop to gaze at the stately ruin, and ponder for a while on the history of its past grandeur; but who is there to tell its story? Forgotten are its legends, forsaken its halls, lost in the night of the past is even the name of the family who once enlivened it with their presence. And why?

The heir to this vast domain in 1740, was a whimsical, restless youth full of longings for freedom and ambition to know and be known in the wide world. Surrounded and hampered as he was by the restraints and prejudices of his position, he looked upon his beautiful mountain home as a prison, his title and the formalities it involved as but links in his chains, nay, in his youthful inexperience his very wealth seemed a drawback to his happiness. Being educated even more liberally than is usual in Germany, his active mind demanded room for expansion, and our young heir determined to see the world



in his own whimsical fashion. From his rank he was entitled to a prominent position, but the court of the celebrated Maria Theresa had no charms for him, and giving offense by his ill-concealed indifference to the foibles of royalty, an opportunity for travel presented itself rather more abruptly than he had anticipated, and he was informed by friends at court that it was either leave, or fall under the open displeasure of his Sovereign.

Enraged by this injustice, he threw aside rank and title, and assuming the dress and manner of a man of the people he turned his back on his stately home and started off joyously to see the great, wide world untrammelled by the circumstances of worldly position.

Gustav Muhr, for as such we must henceforth know him, had traveled butterfly fashion from country to country for ten years when his still restless spirit demanded fresh food to satisfy its cravings. The Old World was exhausted, as was his purse. Youth had past, but vigorous manhood urged that life was still full of opportunities, that the New World held a wealth of untasted pleasures, and that its hospitable shores offered a field for the exercise



of his many and varied talents. Unlike the usual "rolling stone" he had acquired much learning and many accomplishments during these ten years of friction with the world, and the trade he chose for the expression of his life's work serves to illustrate the whimsicality of his many-sided character. Bred as he was to every luxury, refined and developed by travel, weakened, one would almost think, by a life of ease, is it not remarkable that on arriving in America, his first act was to rent a forge he happened to see vacant in his ramble through the town?

The good people were amazed to see the fine gentleman who had arrived on the last vessel arrayed in costly apparel, and by his appearance, his numerous chests and boxes, giving every evidence of wealth and position, sally forth from the Inn one fine morning in working clothes and wend his way to the vacant forge.

But novelty wears off, and soon Muhr's forge was the resort of young and old. The children flocked around him like bees over a sweet-scented flower, and their prattling admiration for the gentle, delightful story-telling stranger, formed the opening wedge which gave him entrance into the hearts and homes



of the parents. All fell victims to his charms, and vied with one another in offering hospitality to the young smith. Of one thing they were certain, he was a gentleman, for under the grime of his chosen trade and the disguise of rough clothing his birth and gentle breeding shone out resplendent. "If he had reasons for concealing his identity, why should they care? Were there not secrets buried in many a bosom, and would any of them prefer to answer questions as to why they had sought shelter under the outstretched wings of the American Eagle?" So he was received and accepted with the unreserve of a new country, where all were strangers.

Soon apprentices and journeymen begged to be taken into Gustav's service, and the whimsical nobleman found himself, to his own great amusement, the head of a thriving business.

Life was a long holiday to his men. Eccentric to a degree one would think almost unbearable, his whims were always enjoyable, and his men loved him with the devotion soldiers feel for their General. His mode of conducting business was most peculiar, and his old restless spirit never fully quieted down, but from time to time would assert itself irresistibly.



Sometimes, when he and his men were busiest and the shop full of yet unfinished work, he would take in his sign saying, "it was all folly to work so hard, that the birds were calling him so fondly he could not work, but must be off into the gay sunshine to see what they were about." So throwing down tools and declaring a holiday, he would bid the boys cover the forge fire, and followed by his men and all the children in the town he would wander out into the open country. Seated in some secluded spot he would entertain them a whole afternoon with stories of his travels, with the weird, sweet music he drew from the heart of his zither, and with the ballads and songs of the old countries he had traversed in his quest of the new and beautiful. Nature had fitted him to be a leader of youth, a professor in some historic university, but caprice had gained the day, and he was happy and contented with this simple audience of youths and children, and the gentle presence of a few of the sweet, prudish maidens, who had followed to look after their mischievous little brothers, of course.

Among the village beauties there was one dainty little maiden who wrought sad havoc with the hearts



of all the lads. They had courted sweet Letty Aitken arduously, and survived her cool reception of their attentions as best they could. But when Gustav appeared on the scene, with one accord they agreed that all chance for them was past, that here was the man worthy to be the husband of their young beauty.

The circumstances of the first meeting of these young people were as peculiar as had been Gustav's whole career.

I have forgotten to describe our courtly forger-master. The race from which he sprung was remarkable for great physical beauty combined with wonderful mental qualities, and Gustav was a worthy scion of his house. The grace and refinement of centuries were concentrated in his person. His manner and bearing were those of a soldier-king, his form tall and lithe, but strong, his hands, begrimed as they were, the perfection of shape, and his face a study for an artist. Clear cut, regular features set off an oval face, eyes of wondrous brightness gleamed like stars beneath a massive brow, teeth of pearly whiteness adorned a mouth of wonderful flexibility.



At one time a sardonic smile played around his mouth, to be followed by a tender, sensitive, almost childlike expression, a quiver of the lips which spoke in turn of emotion or amusement. One did not know at first, whether to dread or love Gustav Muhr.

Hair of jet black fell in curls around the high forehead and over the grand shoulders, in short he was a striking likeness of Mephistopheles, but with a character as full of changing beauties and whims as an evening sky.

One afternoon with the peculiar magnetism of his wierd music he had drawn half the youths and maidens of the town around him, and was beguiling away the sunny hours with the charm of his voice and touch. Melody after melody rose in the pure summer air, delightful even to the simplest child in the company.

Letty Aitken sat somewhat apart, absorbed in the dreams which float through the brain of a young girl. Her eyes were fixed on Gustav's face.

Turning abruptly in her direction, and seeing that her gaze was bent searchingly upon him, he said :

“I know what you are thinking, sweet Mistress Letty.”



The girl flushed and said timidly—"Do you?"

"Yes—you were thinking that I look like the —?"

"Yes, I was," answered Letty frankly.

Gustav threw back his head in a joyous laugh, and rising, begged to have the honor of walking home with her. Arriving at her father's door, he electrified father and daughter by asking in a most princely manner to be allowed the privilege of paying court to the fair daughter of the house, saying that he had at last found the object of his search—a perfectly truthful woman.

Letty was a woman he might well have loved—calm, lofty and pure, and her truthfulness was but one of her many gifts.

The fire of love soon burnt brightly in each heart, and their wedding, which took place after some months of old-time, romantic courtship, was one of the events which has come down to us with the traditions of the town. Prosperity and great home-happiness attended and guarded their career, and though Letty never knew till late in life who her husband really was, her trust and love was so great that no disquieting thought ever crossed her mind.



When at last the twilight of old age was gathering around the successful iron-master, calling his children, he told them the story of his life, and opening his chests displayed the certificates which established his claims to one of the noblest names in Austria.

“But, my children,” said he, “if you would be happy, stay as you are, and rejoice that your father had strength to throw off the trammels of court life and push on free and joyous in the open arena of the world, as the river whose name I took seeks an outlet through the blue Danube to the sea beyond.”

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And so the ruins hang over the edge of the mountains, the river glides along washing their base in its glistening waters, and the descendants of the whimsical heir are happy and prosperous, following in the footsteps of their noble ancestor.



➤ AFTER MANY YEARS. ➤







## AFTER MANY YEARS.

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ONE stormy winter afternoon in the latter part of the first quarter of this century, an old gentleman accompanied by his valet was seen riding into what was then a small town in western Pennsylvania, but which has since developed into one of our greatest manufacturing centres. Dismounting at the only Inn the town afforded, and giving his horse to the care of his valet with orders that it should receive immediate, and careful attention, he called for a generous supply of supper, and the society of his host.

Long the two sat over the savory dishes making a striking contrast of courtly elegance and rude prosperity. Why should this fine old gentleman thus seek the companionship of his host? He had many questions to ask concerning the neighboring families. Who so conversant as "mine host?"



There was a merry twinkle in his eyes when, an hour later, he called for his valet, and ordered him to unpack his traveling bag and produce from its depths the suit of disguise which from the beginning of the long journey had mystified the simple brain of that faithful attendant.

“For de Lawd sake, Massa, what *is* you a gwine to do?” pleaded Ben. “Dis am a feah-ful night, an’ no ways fittin’ for you to be out. An good Lawd! is you gwine to tote yo’ fiddle?”

It was bad enough for his Master to go out in the storm, but to take his precious violin, his priceless Cremona, that was more than Ben’s patience could stand.

“Massa, you jes’ mus’ tell Ben where you is gwinin’.”

It was no use trying to evade the questions of this domestic tyrant. The Master had to take his servant into his confidence, or else be ignominiously followed and watched. This the old gentleman did not wish, so he unfolded his plan to the curious Ben, and received a scolding for his pains, as is generally the case between Master and spoiled family servant. Grumbling and expostulating Ben arrayed his



Master in the disguising suit, metamorphosing him from the fine old gentleman into a poor traveler in shabby attire.

“Now Ben, amuse yourself till I come back, or send for you. And mind you see to my horses,” were the parting orders of the Master as he rode out into the stormy night on an old horse hired from the Inn, his beloved Cremona safely wrapped in the ample folds of his large traveling cloak, his soft, silver-white cue hidden under a coarse red wig, his smooth face disfigured by false whiskers and beard, and his whole personality lost in this strange apparel. Surely no one would know him, perhaps not, but Henry Hunt once seen could not be forgotten. Nature had given him wondrous eyes, and no amount of disguise could hide them. Neither Master nor servant had given them a thought, or perhaps a pair of goggles would have been worn to conceal their beauty.

“I pray de good Lawd Miss Mary will know him to once. Dis yere maskeerade business don’t suit dis chile,” muttered the old darkey.

The fact is Ben had hoped to ride up with his Master to his sister’s home, and astonish the servants



by the style in which they traveled. He was sincerely proud of his handsome old Master, to say nothing of his own becoming livery and bearing. It was humiliating and galling in the extreme to see his Master ride off in mean attire on a wretched horse, to be shorn of all the privileges befitting his state as valet, to be reduced to the humbling position of being left behind.

Faithful old darkey Ben was but human, for do we not all like to be there to see how it is going to be?

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Henry Hunt had occasion to go into what was then the far West, and with brotherly affection resolved to visit his sister whom he had not seen for thirty years. She had married and gone west, and as traveling was not the easy, every day affair it is with us it was no uncommon thing for families to be separated for years, and the intercourse even by letter to be meagre and long delayed. Traveling had to be done either on horseback or in carriages, and those courageous enough to undertake a journey were subject to delays and inconveniences which we have never experienced and can little imagine. The idea had struck Henry Hunt to disguise himself and



see if the old love which had existed between himself and his sister still burned strong enough to break down the barrier he planned to build. We shall see how he performed his rôle.

The Wilkins farm lay some three miles beyond the town, overlooking the Monongahela River, whose waters formed its boundary line on the west. It was an exquisite spot in fine weather, but in this heavy storm when the roar of the river told that its waters were lashed by the fury of the wind, when the road-bed was almost a running stream, its beauty was hidden. Traveling was anything but pleasant. Still the old gentleman, nothing daunted, pushed on and arrived at the farm in time to partake of the merriment of the evening.

Riding around to the kitchen door he asked shelter and was at once admitted, and his horse cared for with true country hospitality. He took a seat in the huge kitchen chimney-place, and keeping himself well bundled up watched the merry scene before him. There had been a gay party of young folks gathered at the River Farm several days before, and as the roads were declared impassable, a number had been forced to stay over till the storm abated.



They had all assembled in the large kitchen for a dance, and those among the young men who could play on violin or flute were doing their utmost to provide the necessary music.

The stranger sat watching the merry dancers silent and composed. Not so the mother of the house. Attracted by the stranger, she kept hovering in his vicinity, visibly losing her composure as the spell of his presence made itself felt.

At last when the young performers had wearied of trying to play, the stranger drew his violin from out the folds of his cloak. Have you ever seen an old man play the violin, and noticed how lovingly he holds the beautiful instrument? As a mother caressing her child does the true lover of music softly hold his violin to his breast, and with head bent down to catch each whisper from the heart of the instrument, with eyes half closed as if to shut out the world from the soul to soul converse, he becomes forgetful of all, lost in the rapture which the poetry of his art awakens in his soul.

So it was with Henry Hunt. When once he began to play, forgetting the rôle he had planned, he let his cloak, hat and wig fall aside, and became



deaf and lost to all else save the soft melody of the viol's voice. Softly at first rose the tender music, as if awakening from a long sleep, stronger grew the strains under the loving touch of the master-hand, and then the music voice died away and the room was filled with the tender, sweet sigh which forms the closing bars of "Life let us cherish."

Bursting into tears, the dear mother of the house threw her arms around the neck of the stranger, exclaiming :

"It is brother Henry !"

Their emotion was so great that it was some time before either regained composure. The old tradition adds : " And thus it was that brother and sister met after the lapse of many years, with hearts as tender and love as strong, as when in youth they had played side by side."







WHAT THE BEACH BIRDS KNOW.







## WHAT THE BEACH BIRDS KNOW.

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"The curved strand  
Of cool, gray sand  
Lies like a sickle by the sea ;  
The tide is low,  
But soft and slow  
Is creeping higher up the lea.

The beach birds fleet,  
With twinkling feet,  
Hurry and scurry to and fro,  
And sip and chat  
Of this and that  
Which you and I may never know."

*John White Chadwick.*

**O**N the shore of the majestic Atlantic, somewhere between 30 and 45 degrees of latitude, there stands a quaint, old-fashioned light-house which rests on the edge of a bluff, and looks out calmly



on the boisterous play of the ever restless waves. The shore at this part is curved in a long, graceful sweep, and at either end of the wide circle a point runs far out into the sea, making a beautiful, but dangerous bit of coast. Beyond a bar extends, of which at low tide the rocks and banks can be seen from the shore, but over which the wild waves dash with glorious majesty when the tide comes in. At either end, and in the centre of this indenture, a light-house throws out its guarding flame, making a triangle of light warning the mariner of the treacherous rocks within. Yet in spite of these precautions, and the vigilance of the coast-guard, many a goodly vessel is dashed to pieces against the cruel rocks, and the wreckage strewn on the gray beach mutely tells the sad tale of disaster.

The two light-houses on the points jutting far out into the sea are fine, modern specimens of scientific architecture; but the one in the centre is old and quaint, and showing plainly that it dates before the era of daring engineering. A powerful flash-light has replaced the simple lamp of old, which seems strangely out of place in the antique tower. But the light-house has accommodated itself to its modern



occupant, and rears its head proudly when the strong light flashes out over the dark waters. At the base of the tower is a long, low house, stretching off behind the bluff, and in this, some years ago, lived the light-house keeper, his daughter, and an old woman as domestic.

John Rush, a sturdy son of the sea, had on the death of his wife, given up his seafaring life, and devoted himself to his baby girl, Anne. The Government appointed him keeper of this old light-house, and there he moved with his precious charge, content to lead a life of comparative inaction, and finding all the novelty he desired in the fresh delights with which the developing nature of the child presented him day by day. There could be no better school in which to rear a young child than by the sea, where the constant music of the waves remind one of the Voice of God, and where His Power is so manifest. So John and Anne grew year by year, the one advancing in gentleness and simplicity, the other in the graceful, beautiful ways of a lovely child. The old roving nature of the father was subdued, and the better side of his strong being



gradually strengthened in the sweet companionship of the little child.

The rude men of the fishing-town laughed at first, and their wives uttered many a wise prediction as to the incapacity of a man to bring up a baby. But their tongues were quieted in time when they saw the child thrive and lose none of the tender grace of a baby girl under the strange care of a father nurse. His mode was peculiar, it must be confessed, for at night when all the wee heads in the world are pillowed and bright eyes closed in sleep, baby Anne could have been found up in the light-house tower keeping watch with her father, and crowing with delight at the huge light when he went to trim the lamp. This did well enough when Anne was a wee child, but these nocturnal watches were impossible when the time came for her to go to school. So with many a misgiving, for he had been courted by most the women-folks of the town, John decided to employ a house-keeper to govern his simple establishment. His choice was a good one, and after the first upheaval of masculine methods, and the settling down into a systematic mode of life, the humble house presented a cozy picture of simple



comfort. Margaret Powres had lost her husband and boy in one of the winter storms years before, and with them her love had died and was buried in their watery grave. But a pity for the motherless little girl filled her heart, and so generous was she in bestowing it that Anne never felt the sorrow which would have overshadowed a less fortunate child's life.

Year after year found the little household much the same. The infirmity of age gathered around John so gradually that he was still vigorous when most men have given up active life. Anne developed into as sweet a maiden as ever was seen. She was like some rare exotic transplanted by fairy hands from its sheltered home to this sturdy, rock-bound coast; but so well did her tender nature adjust itself to its rude surroundings that one never wondered at finding this sweet flower blooming in the sand. She was as modest as the pink star-shaped flowers one finds sometimes growing by the sea-shore, and which surprises us by its gentle dignity when on the parent stem, and which droops immediately it is culled. Such was Anne. A simple little flower, strengthened and beautified by the loving



salt breezes, standing with a quiet grace all her own in her rough sea-side home, and repelling by the innocent purity of her sweet soul, the advances of the gay, thoughtless world.

The fishing-town which was Anne's home had, little by little, come into prominence, till at last it was a fashionable sea-side resort. Attractive at first to the lovers of nature for its grand beauty and simplicity, its fame spread, and alas! for the peace of the honest fisher-folks! great caravansaries sprung up like weeds over night, and the gay world thronged to the heretofore quiet spot to amuse itself at the expense of the old happiness of the little town.

A party of gay young folks seeking for adventure one day, penetrated into the sacred home circle of the quaint old light-house, and from that time there was little peace for Anne. Party after party came ostensibly to be instructed in the wonders of the flash-light, but really to feast their eyes on the modest beauty of gentle little Anne. The haughty ladies would raise their lorgnettes and gaze at the sweet young girl, and the men, a trifle less rude than their fair companions perhaps, would offer her compliments and civilities which were enigmas to the



unsophisticated child. The cool gravity with which she received their attentions was a rebuke to these thoughtless worldlings, and her innocence shielded her from the havoc their admiration might have made of her happiness.

“As fair as Nereid! A veritable sea-nymph!” said the men. “An accomplished coquette!” remarked the envious women, who would have given much to have possessed her fresh young complexion and wealth of golden-brown hair.

But Heaven protected the little maiden, and at the end of each season when the flock of gay people left, and the great hotels stood like ghosts, empty and deserted, and the town relapsed into its old-time quiet, Anne and John would rejoice in the rest which came after the flight of the gay birds of fashion.

One Fall, however, a new element appeared on this famous coast. Government resolved to do its utmost to lessen the danger to navigation, so a corps of engineers were sent to prospect. At their head was Basil Marshall, a young Englishman.

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A gay lad of eighteen years came whistling down the dingy old street, his hat pushed back from his



smooth young forehead, his hands in his pockets, boylike, and by his bright eyes, his elastic step and the sprightliness of his entire personality showing that life was a dream of joy to Basil Marshall, son and heir of Thos. Marshall of the great firm of Marshall & Co.

Turning in the great black doorway of a huge warehouse, and merrily stopping to joke with drivers, porters and clerks, he passed through the dark building like a sunbeam trying to cheer and warm a dungeon by its presence. Finally he came to the glass door marked Private Office, and in this he entered with the freedom and absence of awe which showed him to be the son of the house, but which was really only the result of the whole-souled cheeriness which was one of the boy's greatest charms. Basil Marshall would have entered any man's office in that same cheery manner that bright morning when all the world seemed so full of joy.

"Good morning, Pop. Good morning, Mr. Wise. Why, what's the matter, Father?" he asked, changing his tone, as neither father nor clerk answered his salutation.



Thos. Marshall, a pompous, well fed looking man was standing near his desk which was covered with papers. The desk drawers and the safe were open, the books in disorder and the whole office showed that something of importance had disturbed its usual quiet routine. Both men looked grave and troubled. The father's face was a picture of anger, disappointment and injured pride ; while over the clerk's countenance there was an expression of cunning satisfaction veiled in well-feigned anxiety.

Basil stood looking at the two men.

"Can I do anything for you, Father?" he asked.

The old man turned on him in rage.

"Yes," he said, "tell me where are the hundred pounds you stole last night. Mr. Wise tells me you were the last one in the office, that you closed the safe, and also that you said you would 'have to raise some money if you had to *steal* it.'"

"I did say that, Father, but it was only in fun, and I closed the safe, but I did not steal the money. Mother gave me five pounds this morning, and I paid the bill I owed."

"Surely, Father," he added piteously, "you can not think I would steal."



Words followed words, the wily clerk dexterously fanning the flame of the father's wrath, and bringing evidence upon evidence against the son. Basil stood before his accusers with the courage of innocence, but his father was so well under the influence of his rage that he could see nothing but black crime in his son, and his very calmness was distorted into an assumed bravado. Finally, with a curse, Thos. Marshall bade his son begone, and never again cross the threshold of his house.

"You are no son of mine," said the old man, "and I will not have my house polluted by a thief."

Basil turned to leave the office, but on reaching the door came back.

"May I not go home to see my Mother once more?" asked the poor boy.

"Your *Mother*," shrieked the old man. "You have no Mother. You are an outcast. Go!"

The boy stood gazing at his father, all the fresh brightness of youth gone—a pale, haggard man replacing the laughing boy of an hour back.

"Could it be true? Did he really mean it? Was he never more to see his Mother?" thought the poor boy. Wealth, luxury, position were nothing. —But his *Mother*!



“May God forgive you, Father. Good morning, Mr. Wise.” And with his head bowed down, a strange, haunted look on his young face he passed out among the astonished employees, and was gone—an outcast in the great wide world.

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Emerson says, “The ornament of a house is the friends who frequent it. There is no event greater in life than the appearance of new persons about our hearth.” Anne in her simplicity had never even heard of Emerson, but some such thoughts as these floated through her brain when she saw the humble sitting room of the light-house beautified by the manly presence of Basil Marshall. Thrown at first by force of business with the keeper of the light-house, and being obliged to frequent his house to carry out his work, could anything be more natural than that once there, Cupid should begin to use his time-honored weapons? Basil was a revelation to Anne, for never in the course of her secluded life had she seen such a man.

“But he seems so sad,” thought the tender-hearted girl. “Oh! if father and I could only do something to make him happy!”



At first Basil only came occasionally, but before many weeks every evening found him wending his way to the light-house, where he knew a hearty welcome awaited him from John, and a shy, timid blush of pleasure from Anne. For the first time in the ten weary years since he had been driven from home, peace was filling his soul, and in his love for Anne he found a joy which his sorrow-stricken heart had never known.

“But, was he, an outcast from his father’s heart and home, an accused thief, worthy to appear in her presence, much less to love her?” he asked himself. For one whole long month Basil wrestled with this torturing thought, and instead of spending the evenings with John and Anne, he wandered up and down the coast night after night like a distressed spirit.

Poor little Anne! bereft of the companionship which had grown so strangely sweet, she grieved for her lost friend, and blamed herself as the cause of his loss. Going up, as was her wont, to trim the lamp one night, she spied the dark figure pacing up and down the deserted beach. Her eyes, made more keen by love, recognized Basil, and after



that as he night after night walked the beach consumed with the despairing thoughts born of sad retrospection, Anne watched him from the tower. Can we not believe that the love and pity which surged through her true heart, and which found relief in prayer, were converted into blessings which strengthened the solitary man?

One dark, stormy night Basil went to the lighthouse. It had been a perfect morning, but ere the day had fairly begun, a sudden storm had arisen which grew fiercer as the hours advanced. "A picture of my own life," said Basil, who had grown fanciful from leading a lonely life. He found John and Anne both in the tower, John watchful and his ears straining to catch the sound above the roar of the angry waves which might come from a distressed ship. Anne was on her knees.

"Father, save those at sea to-night," she prayed, using unconsciously the words of the sweet poetess.

"Come down stairs with me," said Basil, almost sternly. "The Coast Guards are out. You can do nothing more than they, and I must talk to you. I can stand this reserve no longer."



They followed him down into the cozy sitting-room. John poked the fire and then drew his chair up luxuriantly to its cheerful warmth. Basil sat by the table with the light of the lamp full on his face. He seemed to seek its glow. Anne took her place at her father's side—John lighted his pipe and offering another to Basil said in his hearty way.

“Come now, my boy, what is it you want to tell us?”

Basil waved back the proffered pipe, and in simple, manly words told the sad story of his life.

On being driven out by his father and forbidden to see his mother, his first thoughts were of despair. His youthful pride prevented him from seeking advice of his friends, and he determined to leave England at once.

Thanks to the generosity of his dear mother that morning, the sale of his watch, studs and ring, he raised enough money to procure a steerage passage to America, with a little over to provide for the first days after landing. He had been studying civil engineering at home, and determined if possible to follow his profession in America. By dint of pre-severance, hard work and will power he con-



trived to live, till at last he had succeeded in obtaining a position in the Coast Survey. Since then all had been clear sailing ; but God alone knows how he suffered the first few years.

“But, you Americans are God’s own people,” he said, “and, as I have told you, I found work and wages when in England I would have been forced to starve.”

By depriving himself of every comfort, keeping only enough to barely sustain life, he had been able to pay his father the lost hundred pounds. He had sent it to his father’s lawyer, and had each time received the receipt for the money accompanied with a few hard, dry words, such as the world bestows on a convict.

“Since I have paid off the debt, I have written letter after letter to my father, but each has been returned unopened,” and Basil drew from his pocket a package of letters and threw them on the table.

“So I am deemed an outcast and a thief, and this is why I have discontinued my visits to this house.”

“With all my heart I love your pure, beautiful daughter, Mr. Rush,” he continued, “but I would



not insult you by offering her the heart of a despised outcast."

"You would'nt!" cried John with tears running down his rugged cheeks, and clasping Basil in a hearty embrace. "The only trouble is that you are too good for us. You are a gentleman, and we are only simple folks," he added in a trembling voice.

"My poor Mary, Anne's mother, was but a poor lassie, and I am a rough man. Your father is a—"

"Mean, low, purse-proud brute! My mother, God bless her! while she is the sweetest, dearest mother on earth, is only the daughter of as simple people as yourselves. My father has made money, and with each pound has so swelled with pride that he is like a fat frog," said Basil irreverently.

After great mental strain human nature is apt to seek relief in absurdity, and Basil laughed with a nervous energy foreign to the grave man they had known. All the while Anne had stood with tearless, wide open eyes riveted on Basil's face.

"Now that you know all, will you have me, little Anne?" asked Basil, holding open his arms.

"My love, my love!" cried the girl with her head pillowed on his breast.



It was a happy evening spent at the old lighthouse. Basil gathered up his discarded letters and thrust them into the open fire, not however, before the address was indelibly impressed on Anne's active mind.

It was late when the trio parted. Anne went to the door with her lover.

"See," she said, "the stars are shining and the storm has all cleared away. So shall the sorrow of your life, my love."

\* \* \* \* \*

Had little Anne turned schemer? Why was it that there was such an air of mystery about her all day long, and why had she slipped off by herself just at dusk? There were two bright red spots on her cheeks when she handed a letter to the old postmaster of the town and asked him to put a foreign stamp on it.

"Oh! ho!" chuckled the old man, but Anne was off before he read the inscription, "Mrs. Thos. Marshall, 57 — Place, Birmingham, England," and was back home and quietly laying the table for supper before he had gotten over his astonishment.



Such a letter as Anne had written ! No mother's heart thirsting and hungry for news of her boy was ever refreshed by a more tender, explicit and consoling epistle. All these years Basil's name had been forbidden in that pompous, gaudy house. Never once had the poor mother heard of him, for the stern, proud father had never even told that the money was paid. And she had mourned him as dead, and had secretly grieved for him till she was worn and aged with emotions subdued. And now, fresh from the loving hand of a young girl came the glorious news of his brave struggle, his success, and then timidly of his love for her and her love for him. The thoughtful girl had even enclosed his photograph taken with his corps of men, and showing him in all the strength of his developed beauty.

"Send him some words of love and you will have always the grateful prayers of Anne Rush," closed this wonderful letter.

One week, two weeks, three weeks.

"Oh ! was the mother dead !" thought Anne. "And would Basil never receive her blessing." But, no, Heaven is too kind for that. The storms



of Basil's life were past, and before him lay only love and happiness.

He came bounding over the sands one evening. "See!" he cried. "A letter from Mother, and wondrous news from Father." The letter was read, and the news. What was that?—The old confidential clerk of Marshall & Co., had died leaving behind him a document showing how he had by a cleverly concealed system of fraud robbed the firm of large sums of money. At the time of the theft of which Basil was accused, he had not time to cover his act, and hence his cowardly shifting of the blame on his employer's son. The misery and disgrace were all over, and he could hold up his head.

"Disgrace," said John. "There was no disgrace, for you were innocent."

"Will you go home, Basil?" asked Anne timidly.

"Not till you go with me as my wife, my darling, and then it will be only to pay a visit. My sweet bird would droop away from her native beach, and I would never be happy in England again."

The Winter and Spring flew by, and Summer found a model Life Saving Station standing on guard. But John had watched that other edifice



which was being built of the gold of pure love, and the steel of truth and constancy. It saddened him at first, but as he became more and more convinced of Basil's sterling qualities, and saw the genuine earnestness of his love, his selfishness, for such he deemed it, gave way to a generous relinquishing of the first place in his child's heart, and a desire to do all in his power to further her happiness. Besides he knew he would have them both to live with him, for had not Basil promised that he would make America his home?

Anne had a habit of always going out to watch the tide come in. She and the little sand pipers, as the simple fisher-folks call the beach-birds, would often be the only watchers of this most beautiful act of Nature. For years they been her usual companions, but through all the soft Spring, a tall, handsome man had found that he too was fascinated by the music of the in-rushing tide.

With a smile on his kindly face John watched them one evening. As they stood hand in hand, and he saw the rays of the setting sun bathing them in his glory, sailor-like he thought it a good omen of their future peace and happiness.



We will leave them in the undisturbed enjoyment of the beautiful scene before them, where, like the little birds playing at their feet, they talk—

“ . . . . and chat

Of this and that

Which you and I may never know.”







HUNT SARAH'S WEDDING BOOTS.







## AUNT SARAH'S WEDDING BOOTS.

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“**W**HAT, you never heard the story of Aunt Sarah’s wedding boots? Dear, dear! to think that Will never told you! Why! I can’t see how you ever got through your courting without hearing *that* story. And when you were getting your trousseau—why it seems to me he must have told you when you talked about your shoes.”

“But Auntie dear, I never said anything to Will about my shoes.”

“You didn’t? Well, I declare! Never said anything to Will about your shoes. Here, child, hold up your foot. As neat a little foot as ever I saw!”

“I can’t imagine what Will was thinking about,” continued the old lady. “Lovers don’t talk about boots? Well, perhaps not, dear. But, when Will



saw that mite of a foot, it seems to me he must have thought of shoes. There, child, don't hug me too hard. I am sure John and I talked about shoes in our courting days. To think that you have been in the family three months and haven't even heard of Aunt Sarah! Well! I must tell you about her myself."

"Yes, Aunty dear, and about your sweet self too," said Alice.

Aunt Mary sat in an easy chair by the open fire, a sweet old lady with short white curls around a lovely, smiling face, which in its strong beauty showed that she had borne the heat and burden of the day bravely, and was now patiently awaiting the long deferred reward. "Old age is the crown of dignity" we are told, and truly Aunt Mary wore her honors with all the grace and pathetic grandeur which marks those who have led a long life of holiness. Aged as she was, she retained her sight and wonderful memory, and it was only when she tried to walk that one remembered that she was old. But there were always willing young arms for her to lean on, devoted nieces and nephews to aid the feeble steps of one whose heart was every-



body's resting place, and the depository of all their joys and sorrows. Aunt Mary was a lovely old lady, an ideal of quiet happy old age. She was the embodiment of cheerfulness, and always happy and gay, for under the depths of the sweet religious feeling which had governed her life and was now casting its sunshine far into the twilight of her decline, she possessed a rare fund of good spirits which had outlasted the strength of vigorous womanhood, met trouble and pain with a smile, and enabled her to see ever the bright side of the clouds which overshadow all lives.

Alice, the fair young bride, sat on a low stool at Aunt Mary's feet, with her golden head resting gently against the old lady's knee, and with her soft white hand tenderly stroking the wrinkled, but beautiful one held out so lovingly.

They made a sweet picture. The young wife eager, full of ambition, anxious to taste the bitter-sweets of life.—The old Mother calmly resting, her work done, husband and children gone before, and she patiently awaiting the setting of life's sun. The past and all its sorrows and joys lay behind her.—She had now but a little while to wait, and the



husband of her youth, and her little children would be her's again, never to be separated.

Can not the young wife, this sweet, fair Alice, learn the lesson of life, the lesson of loving, suffering and patience, from this tender-hearted old Mother left so long to be a guide and support to the young members of the family?

I sat quietly watching the sweet picture made by these two beautiful women, many thoughts surging through my brain; but my prosy meditations were dissipated by the cheery voice of Aunt Mary asking me to bring her the box in which she kept her precious souvenirs of the past.

Soon we were all three laughing and crying in turn over the contents of the "treasure box." Aunt Mary's sweet old face would be suffused in blushes when some token of her own love story would come to light, and then again tears would come to the calm, tender eyes over a baby's shoe half worn, or a little curl cut from the shining head ere the grave hid it forever.

Ah! it was a happy morning—one of the days to be remembered all through life.



But finally Aunt Mary took out a little bundle tied with ribbon which had long since been yellow with age. Carefully unwrapping the soft paper, a pair of slim, tiny gaiters,—*boots* Aunt Mary called them,—were revealed, and with them a closely written sheet of old-fashioned blue letter paper.

“My eyes have gotten too old to read Aunt Sarah’s story, so you read it to us, child,” said Aunt Mary.

I took the paper reverently, and with my eyes full of tears, began—“The story of my Wedding Boots, written by me, Sarah King, to be sent to my brother, Edward Yates, who is far away searching for health in the soft air of the South.”

“You know, my dears,” interrupted Aunt Mary, “that the Edward Yates to whom this letter is addressed, was my Father, your Grandfather, and Aunt Sarah was his favorite sister. He spent several years in the far South, and while he was there his sister met Silas King, and married him. But her love for her brother only strengthened with time, as true love always does, and when he came back they were as united as when they had played together as children.”



"But, Auntie dear, how is it that you have the shoes? It seems to me that Aunt Sarah's children ought to have them," said Alice.

"Oh!" said dear Aunt Mary with a smile, "father was so delighted with this long letter and the story of the boots, that when he came back home he begged Aunt Sarah to give them to him. He said he hadn't been here to get any of the wedding cake, so he might, at least, have the famous boots. So she gave them to him. Father always treasured them, and I have often seen him take them out and look at them lovingly; and he would always tell us some tender little story of his beloved sister."

"But, read the letter dear," she added.

I read as follows:

FORREST HILL,

*January 30, 1798.*

*My Dear Brother Edward:*

I feel that I must give you a full and exact account of the events of the past month, during which time I have changed from "pretty little Sarah" as you are so fond of calling me, into Mistress Silas King, the happy wife of the best man



on earth. No laughing, Ned, at my wifely remarks. I would not say so were it not true. The only thing which has marred my happiness has been that my dear brother, the companion of all the joys and sorrows of my life has been far away from me in this time of my greatest happiness. Amid the laughing faces which have surrounded me I have missed yours, my beloved brother; and when gaiety was at its height, and it would seem that we had reached the acme of pleasure, I have felt lonely and sad, looking in vain for the one dearest to me of all my family. But I must not make you sad. 'Twould be a poor sort of comfort to send my dear boy who is off searching for health, which I trust you have long since found. Your last letter told us that all the bad symptoms had left. Let the next one assure us that they left to stay.

And now, Ned, you are anxious to hear all about my new home and surroundings, just as anxious as I am to tell you. Father wrote you about my engagement, and what a brave, gallant man has honored me and you by choosing me for his wife. Wait till you see my husband! I cannot write about him. Tears fall and blur the page as I cast



around in my mind for words to express his manly beauty, his noble, generous character, his loving heart, and above all his love for his "wee wifey" as he calls me.

I have been here in my new home two weeks, and I already love it. You know the place, so I shall not try to describe its many beauties. Little did we think that bright Spring morning we rode through these grounds with the Thorntons, and stopped to admire the house, that in three years I should return as its mistress. I did not even know Silas then by sight—now I feel as if I must have known him all my life.

I am writing you a very long letter. Well, dear, I am a bit home-sick. The girls, with Letty and Prue, started for home yesterday, and this is my first day alone in my new grandeur as Mistress of this noble old place. Silas is all I could wish, and I am very happy. But I feel a little strange, and so I am chatting to you to keep up my spirits.

Now, I must tell you about our wedding, and the catastrophe of my boots—or the tragedy, I might call it. You know how I always have criticised any of our friends who made a great show at their



weddings ; so I determined that my wedding costume should be a model of unassuming, quiet beauty. I selected a light gray silk which struck me as being most bride-like. Then wishing all my costume to accord, I had my bonnet made of a piece of the silk.

My thoughts then turned to my boots. On consulting old Hans, the shoe-maker, imagine my dismay on having him tell me that never had he seen any prunella to match my silk. "Have it I must," I said ; so the poor old man wrote even to Boston and New York, and finally found a piece of goods which exactly matched my silk. I enclose a sample of each, so you can see that my fancy was gratified.

I had given him three months in which to make my boots, but they never came home till one week before the day appointed for our wedding. Well, the boots arrived, and so did the day on which I was to turn my back on my old home and maiden state, and start forth on my new life glorious in my gray prunellas. Behold me, Ned, clothed all in gray from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet !

It was a bitterly cold day, but clear and bright. Carriage after carriage drove off from our home filled with pretty girls in gay attire, each with her



cavalier. Mother and Father had gone ahead, and just as I was about to step in my carriage with Silas, old Aunt Phebe rushed out declaring that I would "freeze to def' in dem no sense boots," and producing from her pocket a heavy pair of worsted stockings, which "nolens volens," I was forced to slip over my dainty foot gear.

So off I drove, happy in the consciousness that for once our old Church would see a bride all in accord—if I thought at all. But, I was in such a flutter, and so nervous that I hardly remember anything. I have an indistinct recollection of hearing our old Pastor giving us his blessing, and of then turning to come down the aisle, which seemed to me a sea of faces.

But, Ned, dear, sympathetic old Ned, imagine if you can, my horror! In stepping back into the carriage the wedded wife of handsome Silas King, I happened to glance downward.

After months of anxious waiting, much trouble and expense, I had walked up and down that aisle—in what?

Not my beloved, dainty gray boots. No! In all their primitive whiteness, old Aunt Phebe's worsted



stockings covered the objects of my weeks of mental anguish.

“Oh ! Silas,” I cried, “just look !”

“Well, dear, what is the difference, so your feet were warm.”

And with these first words of Silas as my husband, I will close my letter.







❧ HILDA. ❧







## HILDA.

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**T**HE quaint old city of Strasburg lay asleep in the golden glow of a hot afternoon sun one day in early June, A. D. 175—.

The waters of the Rhine glistened in the sunlight—the river flowed on smoothly and gently, reflecting the image of the glowing clouds on its placid bosom.

The world looked beautiful and calm—sorrow would seem a stranger on this fair scene—care and trouble could not dare to intrude on the tranquillity of the afternoon quiet.

The river, the beloved Rhine, flowed on and on, the ebb and flow of its tiny waves making sweet music to the ears of the happy.

But, alas! for Hilda Brawner!

Away in the distance the sunlight caught again



and again the white sails of the vessel which was taking away her heart's beloved—her betrothed.

The sound of the water made no music for her—the splashing against the rocks on which she stood, the glistening little waves, the whirling of the eddies, nay, even the soft breeze springing up as the day declined, whispered, “he is gone, he is gone.”

Long and silently had she stood, gazing with wide open, grief-strained eyes at the fast disappearing vessel.

Finally, one more sunlit view of the white sails, and it had passed from her sight.

A turn in the river, a quiver of sunlight against a full rigged vessel, a sound as of the rushing of many waters, and Hilda awoke to the realization that she was alone.

“Come, little one, it is time to return home. The good Mother will scold us for staying so long;” and the venerable old Grandfather laid his hand gently on Hilda's arm as if to lead her away.

They had bidden Johann farewell at the city wharf, and then at the earnest pleading of Hilda, the Grandfather had driven her to this point a few miles below the city where there was an extensive



view of the river, and from where she could watch the vessel for many, many miles.

The cumbrous sailing vessels of those days were slow, and one's dear ones were not snatched out of sight as in this age of Ocean racers.

So little Hilda had stood through all the glory of the afternoon with her eyes riveted on the fast-fading vessel, oblivious and forgetful of all else.

"Come, little one, the Angelus has long since rung—nay, even now I hear the Cathedral bell tolling the *De profundis*."

The old man reverently bared his head and stood motionless, while Hilda, according to the ancient custom, recited the touching Psalm.

One more long look at the now deserted river, and with a sigh as if from a soul but lately awakened to pain, Hilda turned to follow the venerable Grandfather who had waited patiently so long.

"Father, father, I cannot stay in this wretched country. I will follow my beloved to America."

"Softly, softly, little one! How can you, a child, cross the great seas?"

"I can, and I will do it. I will not stay where the cursed laws make my beloved an exile. Lisbeth will



go with me. We are betrothed, and I have a right to be at Johann's side. In six weeks another vessel will sail. I will go on it."

Hilda was an orphan, and this can somewhat explain why she was allowed to carry out what would appear to be the idle threat of a love-sick maiden.

Her parents had died when she was a tiny child, and the dear Grandparents had brought her up surrounded by every luxury wealth could procure.

While she was yet but a child she was betrothed to Johann Ruhl.

The little ones had grown up side by side, and, as was not always the case in these pre-arranged marriages, they were deeply attached to one another.

A few weeks previous the formal betrothal had been celebrated with great rejoicing, and the day for the wedding was fixed at an early date.

Life looked fair and sweet to the young lovers, and preparations for the wedding were merrily progressing.

The presents from relations and friends had begun to be sent. Quaint silver, costly china and glass,



even massive pieces of furniture with which to furnish the house the Grandfather was building, had been received.

A thunder-clap broke on the sunny happiness of this scene.

The King issued a proclamation that all the youths of twenty-one and more should be enlisted for the standing army, for a period of seven years. None were to be exempt.

Great was the lamentation through all the broad land of Prussia.

The wealthy sought to buy exemption for their sons by bribe, and the poor besought those in power to spare at least the sons who were the support of their old age.

But the King, Frederick II., was inflexible, and the old conscript law was enforced with more rigor as it met with such bitter opposition.

War was the ruling passion of Frederick's life, and the army was his first thought, hence the youth of his country were sacrificed to his relentless ambition.

Johann Ruhl was a proud, strong-willed youth, and his spirit rebelled against this unjust law.



He would not bend his neck to this yoke of seven years slavery, and he resolved to escape tyranny by flight.

Not that he was a coward. His daring and almost foolhardy courage in the struggle for independence in the country of his adoption, proved his character; but he would bow to no tyrant.

The civil service and detective force must have been very meagre in spite of Frederick's rigor, for Johann sailed away from Strasburg, disguised it is true, as an old man, but taking with him large chests of valuables, and with his spacious pockets well lined with sterling silver.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Six weeks after, true to her resolve, Hilda stood on an outgoing vessel, the Werra, with her nurse Lisbeth, as companion.

She had resisted all entreaties of friends and relations. No picture of failure which the imagination of anxious friends conjured up could daunt her loving heart.

To all she answered the same: "I must go—Johann needs me. He will know I am coming, and will be there to meet me."



She was imbued with all the homely superstitions of her nationality, consequently had perfect confidence in the promptings of her loving heart.

She felt that Johann needed her, and that as her heart went out to him, he would feel the influence of its loving solicitude, and know that she was coming.

She was indeed a superstitious little maiden, but when we think how her beloved had been torn from her embrace by cruel laws we can forgive her, can we not?

Surely she was an ardent and true lover.

Finally the Grandparents had, against their better judgment, yielded to her prayers and tears, and though they were criticised and condemned by all their friends for their folly, they set to work to fit her out for the long and perilous journey.

Lisbeth, her nurse, gladly consented to accompany her darling. Old as she was, she still possessed the elements which make a roving nature.

Indeed it was whispered among her fellow-servants that she had a streak of dark gipsy blood in her veins; and when they saw her delight at the prospects of this journey to an unknown land, they



gravely shook their heads, and uttered many a wise saying as to the danger of trusting the beautiful young Fraulein with only an old woman.

If the truth were known, they were, one and all, just a bit jealous that Hilda should prefer old Lisbeth to their more youthful selves.

A hope had sprung up in their hearts when they heard of her resolve, for they were possessed with secret longings for the land of freedom.

At last the day came for the sailing of the Werra.

Hilda with all her relations, uncles, aunts and cousins to the third and fourth degree, had gone to early Mass in the old Cathedral, and knelt before the altar to receive the blessing of heaven for the last time.

The hands of the aged Pastor trembled as he laid them on the golden head of brave little Hilda, one of the youngest lambs of his flock.

It was he who had baptised her, prepared her for the reception of all the Sacraments, been present and signed the betrothal contract, and he had hoped to perform the wedding ceremony.

Alas ! instead, he was bestowing a farewell blessing !



When the iron hand of law is laid on a country, many a fair promise is crushed by its weight.

The sun caught the golden ringlets of Hilda's head, and the gentle breeze from the river kissed her fair cheeks as she stood on the deck of the vessel gazing earnestly at the fast receding home of her youth.

On the rocks where she had stood so disconsolately barely six weeks before, she saw her venerable Grandfather, the "Good mother," Elsie, Hans, and Margory, her favorite cousins, all come to watch, as she had done, the outgoing vessel.

A turn in the river, a last cheer from the gallant crew, and home was a thing of the past.

The wide, dim future lay before her—God alone knew what it held.

Hilda was young, her heart was full of hope ;—and was not Johann, her beloved, waiting for her on the distant shores of America ?

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After a long, tedious and uneventful sail of many weeks, Hilda at last found herself nearing what was to be from henceforth the home of her choice.



Who can tell the emotions which filled her heart as the ungainly, but trusty vessel turned into the Delaware Bay, and the green fields and trees on its shores welcomed the eyes weary of the monotonous blue of the sea !

The old vessel crept up the Delaware River, past scattered farms and little bunches of houses which looked poor indeed to Hilda's eyes, accustomed as they were to the old palaces and churches of her Cathedral crowned home.

“Could it be? Had she been right? Was her love potent enough to affect her beloved even through all those weary wastes of Ocean?”

Hilda closed her eyes—a grating sound struck her ears, as the small boat she had seen rowing towards them, drew alongside the Werra.

There was a rush to the side of the vessel, many voices. No, there was but one voice for her, and when she regained consciousness she found herself in the arms of her beloved, her Johann.

Brave little Hilda ! Not once had her courage or hope forsaken her all through the long voyage ; but here, when the goal is reached, her lover's voice is



heard, she falls into his arms a poor, trembling little bundle of weakness.

Joy, like sorrow, seldom kills ; so Hilda, Johann and Lisbeth soon formed the merriest little party aboard the staunch old Werra.

Who shall say that Hilda was not an ardent lover, or who question the propriety of her conduct ?

Great love had urged her on, faith in her betrothed had upheld her during the weary voyage, and hope had strengthened her to endure all.

That she was rewarded we know from the story of her long life.

Johann Ruhl was fully worthy of the sacrifice she made of home and country for his sake, and never once did she repent of her act.

Can we decide which was the strongest element in Hilda's love, Faith or Hope ?







THE BRIDAL BOUQUET.







## THE BRIDAL BOUQUET.

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**T**WO friends grew up side by side—the one tall and stately, with a wealth of blue-black hair, large grey eyes shaded by long lashes, clear-cut, regular features, olive complexion through which the ebb and flow of the rich young blood could be plainly seen. A patrician beauty, who would have graced a castle in the feudal ages. The other, a frail, delicate flower. The two could be well represented by the stately rose, the “American Beauty,” and the modest little white Violet. The comparison suited them very well, for the names of the friends were Rose and Violet.

Though the violet has none of the stately grace of the “American Beauty,” it has a beauty all its own, a modest, simple beauty which arouses the best that is within us. One can admire the haughty



“American Beauty,” place it in some handsome vase, from whence, as we look at it with wondering delight, it seems to accept our homage with the calm dignity of a queen ; but with the modest little Violet it is different. With its tear-bedewed, drooping head it appeals to our love. We touch the little flower tenderly, raise its modest face to our own, fondle and caress it as we would a child, and either pin the fragrant blossom on our bosom, or put it in the finest, the most fragile glass we possess. One felt somewhat the same with these two friends, though the few who were really admitted into the inner sanctuary of Rose’s reserved nature knew, that under that cold exterior was hidden a heart as simple and tender as Violet’s own. They had been friends from babyhood, these two, and life looked bright and gay, as leaving childhood behind,

“Standing with reluctant feet,  
Where the brook and river meet,  
Womanhood and childhood fleet.”

Ah ! could the one see the sad Angel of Pain beckoning her onward ? Did she foresee that he was to be her constant companion ? It must have been, or else, why did her great, lovely brown eyes so soon



She said they seemed written for her. Ever after to her the Angel of Pain was a friend, and never was she known to murmur or complain.

Years went on, and still the dear girl lay chained, as it were, to her couch, but always hopeful, full of life and spirits, taking a keen interest in everything going on, and never relapsing into the peevish, narrow-minded state so usual with invalids. Her love for her friends never wavered, and her interest in all their joys and sorrows was as eager as if she were out with them in the bright, beautiful world. They came to her with all their sorrows and pleasures, and her generous heart never for one instant begrudged them the delights which they enjoyed, and which it is natural for youth to crave. Words cannot paint the picture of that sweet young life, shattered, but yet beautiful. To think of it one would say it was a sad, sad picture, one that would touch and subdue the coldest heart. But, no one ever entered that room, made sacred by the presence of that gentle sufferer, without being strengthened and cheered by the sight of that lovely girl, so bright and merry, so full of sympathy for joy or sorrow, so uncomplaining, so young and so beautiful. A peace and calm



filled the soul of those who were privileged to enter within the charmed influence of her presence.

The love of the two friends had grown with the years, and while our modest little Violet in her seclusion never lost her youth and girlish manner, Rose developed and matured into a majestic woman. It may have been from the lesson taught by the withdrawal of her dear friend from the world by the Hand of God, that made her mind take such a serious mold, or perhaps that small, sweet voice of conscience spoke in the depths of her true heart, showing her the uselessness of a life spent wholly in the pursuit of pleasure.

Which it was I do not know, but Rose very soon gave up, little by little, the gay world, and her young life was spent in the service of the poor. Still she had many pleasures, and of friends and admirers not a few, and before many years she came to Violet to tell that piece of news so dear to the heart of a girl—her engagement.

Violet heard the news with delight, and while Rose poured out the story of her love, her fears and joys, Violet listened, holding lovingly the warm strong hand of her friend.



Rose left her, feeling that she had been strengthened and fortified for the new life before her by the love and sympathy of her gentle friend.

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The day of Rose's wedding was bright and clear. The parlors were filled with merry guests and the house brilliant with flowers. A hush fell over the assembled guests as Rose, leaning on her old Father's arm, came up the broad hall and turned into the front parlor where Edgar Lewis, her lover, awaited her. All eyes were turned on the lovely bride, who, true to her resolve to give her life and substance to the poor, had instead of the silk and satin usually worn as bridal costume, selected a simple white mull, which hung about her graceful form in soft folds. She had no need of the discarded elegancies, for never did a bride look more beautiful, nor have many received more heartfelt admiration. It was a quiet wedding, beautiful in its simplicity.

Rose carried a superb bunch of flowers, and just as she was about to leave the parlor to don her traveling costume, she handed it to Violet's young sister Frances, who, radiantly beautiful in a simple white dress, had stood by the side of the stately bride.



“Give these to my beloved Violet, and tell her that her absence was the one thing which marred my happiness to-day,” said Rose.

Violet cried over the Bridal Bouquet, and prayed as only a woman would that her precious Rose might always be happy, and her life as pure and beautiful as the flowers she had held in her hand.

As long as there was any life in the fair blossoms, Violet kept the Bouquet by her side ; but a day soon came when its beauty had all departed. Sadly she picked the poor withered flowers apart one by one, to see if, at least, a few might still be worth keeping. All were dead save one little sprig of geranium, and this looked sadly drooping. Violet’s mother was a great lover of flowers, and well-skilled in the art of caring for them. Her heart was bound up in her suffering child, and the one thought of her life was to give her pleasure.

“Let me take that little cutting, Violet dearest, and plant it. Perhaps it may grow,” she said.

“Oh ! mother darling, would it not be too splendid if you could raise it, and then we could give it to Rose. I think it would be lovely,” said the poor child delightedly.



For weeks and months Violet and her mother nursed the little plant. At first it seemed doubtful, but by a judicious system of pruning and tending it thrived, and by Rose's first wedding anniversary it was a fine healthy plant, and, wondrous to tell, full of blossoms and buds.

Violet sent it to Rose with a tender little note, and can we marvel that Rose shed bitter-sweet tears over the geranium? Violet had kept it a secret from her friend, so the pleasure was two-fold.

The little plant had thrived under the loving mother's care all that year, but not so her child. The white geranium had bloomed, but the white violet—ah! that was to blossom soon in the Garden of the Master, and the heart-broken mother bowed her head in submission to His Will. She had seen her child suffer so much, could she not rejoice that rest and joy would soon be her's?

The months dragged on, and another year was added to the long term of Violet's pain. But the Master called for His white Violet one day, and the sad Angel of Pain and the sweet Angel of Death sped down to earth, and into that sacred chamber.



Tenderly raising the fair, fragile flower from the mother's bosom, they soared upward through the starry skies, and with songs of joy and love laid it at the Feet of Him Who had loaned it to earth.

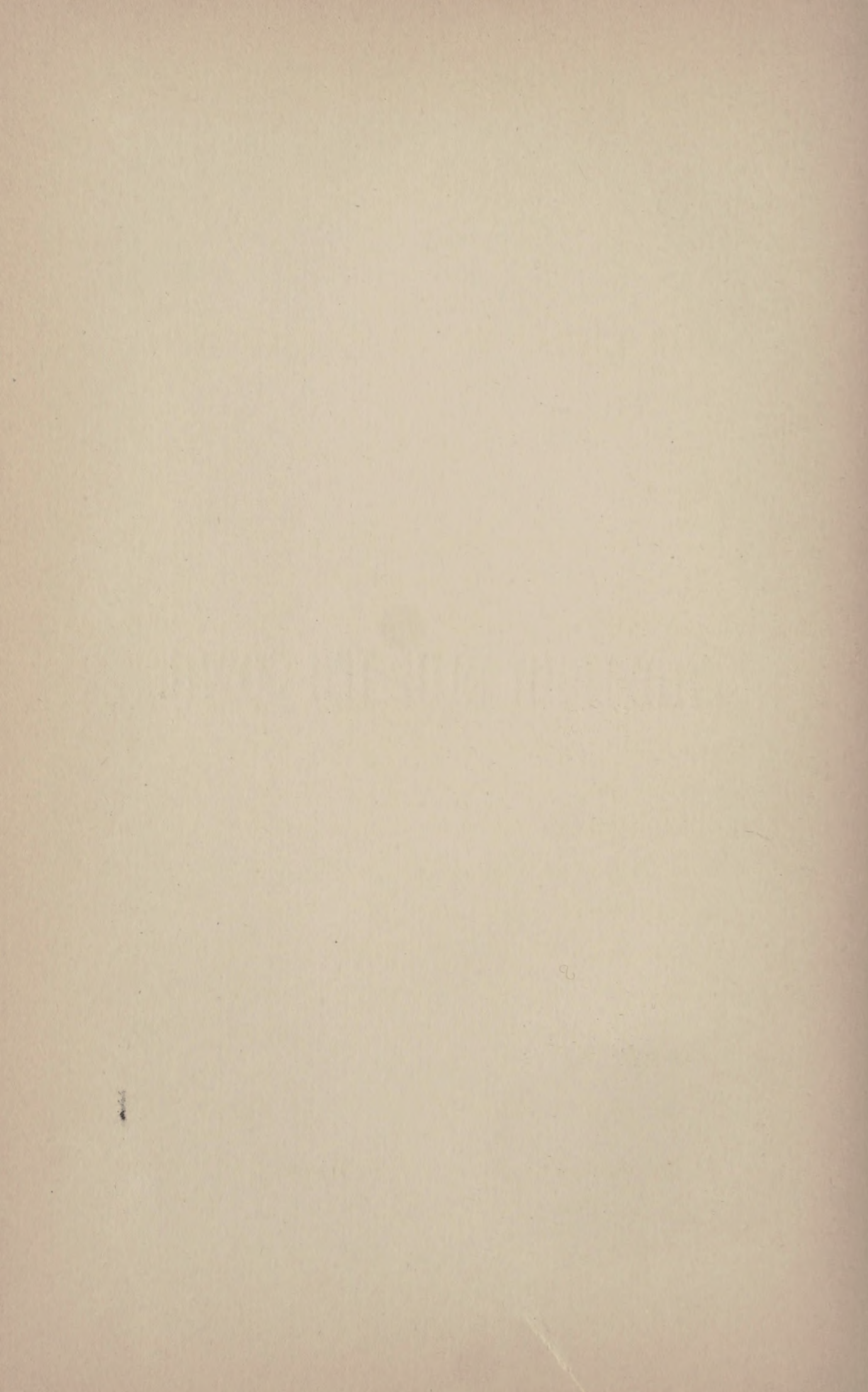
When Violet lay cold and beautiful in the sleep of death, Rose came, and on Violet's wan little hands laid a bunch of pure white geranium blossoms.

Violet is in Heaven, Rose on earth doing good, and the white geranium still lives and blooms.



THE LIGHT BLUE TEA GOWN.







## THE LIGHT BLUE TEA GOWN.

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PARIS, *September 21st, 1887.*

*Mademoiselle :*

IT is with the greatest astonishment that I learn from some of your compatriots that there are some de Regniers living in America. Through them I learn how to address you, as also that an American lady would not take it amiss should I write. Till I met these gentlemen I had thought that I and my son alone bore the name. Will you kindly do me the honor to communicate with me telling me the names of your ancestors, the date of their arrival in your fair country, and also any item of family history you think would tend to enlighten a student of genealogy. Thanking you for the trouble you will take, allow me to offer you my profound respect and duty.

LOUIS ALEXIS PIERRE DE REGNIER.

TO MADEMOISELLE FRASQUITA MARGUERITE DE REGNIER.



This formal letter, written on paper embellished with the armorial bearings of the de Regnier family, met the astonished gaze of Frasquita.

Selected from a pile of letters on account of its evidently foreign appearance, her delight over its contents made her forget her other correspondents, and their favors fell to the floor in a heap, as she jumped up and danced around the room in her excitement over receiving a letter from "a real live count."

"Frasquita, I am ashamed of you," said her mother. "You know your dear papa always said he had relations in France, and had he lived, no doubt, we too would by this time have added a seal to our notes. Dear, dear! think of your writing to Jennie, for instance, and signing yourself, Frasquita, Countess of Regnier sur Loire."

"Stranger things than that have happened. Maybe, some day I will—"

"But, oh! dear, there is nine o'clock, and I must be off, or that tiresome old 'school marm' will be giving me 'a going over.'"

"Frasquita, I *insist* that you use more elegant language. What would the Count say, could he hear you?"



“Oh! you dear, foolish little mother! Don’t begin to work coronets on the handkerchiefs you bought yesterday, till the Count ‘turns up,’ and we ‘look him over.’”

And saying this the dear, impetuous girl gave her mother a hug, and flew, rather than walked off to her daily work of trying to make French verbs take root and bear fruit in the fertile soil of American brains.

While we leave Madame de Regnier amazed and elated over the French letter, and, mother-like, weaving fair dreams for her beautiful Frasquita, we will have to go back, say fifty years, to find out the origin of the family.

Early in the century, Philippe Antoine de Regnier, tired of the restraints of the old world, left France, as he thought, to pay a visit only to America.

But, very soon meeting a beautiful young girl, Louise Tronçon, a daughter of a refugee from San Domingo, he forgot his home and country, and investing his money in land, settled down to the happy life of a Louisiana planter. One son was born to this couple, who, at the breaking out of the late war had just married.



As the civil war has nothing to do with our story, we will pass over its horrors.

Soon after its close, old de Regnier died, leaving to Philippe an impoverished plantation, several pieces of unusually handsome antique silver, and a package of old papers, which Philippe never thought of reading over—for he was a careless fellow, and though he was devoted to his fair young wife, had not forethought enough to conceive, that perhaps these very papers might enable him to raise himself out of the poverty to which he was reduced.

He sold the plantation, and with the remains of his shattered fortune came North, where, owing to the change of climate and a naturally weak constitution, he soon died, leaving his fair young wife with little Frasquita a baby in arms.

The young widow was brave and truly worthy of the noble name she bore; and after struggling through all the hardships of poverty, we find her this bright morning in October, in cosy little apartments, and looking so sweet and lovely that she well deserved the pet names Frasquita was so fond of calling her.



But dreams must end, and Madame, feeling the reproach of conscience at having lost so much time when her dear Frasquita was so hard at work, began at once to straighten up her rooms to receive the twenty young ladies who came three times a week, to read and talk French with herself and Frasquita. For you must know they had become the fashion; and so much so that they were obliged to take their pupils in large classes.

Among the letters scattered on the floor which Frasquita had not even time to pick up, was one with the same foreign post-mark, and the same handwriting, but addressed to Madame de Regnier. It was as follows:

PARIS, *September 27th, 1887.*

*My Dear Madame:*

I took the liberty a few days since of addressing a letter to your daughter, Mademoiselle Frasquita Marguerite de Regnier, not knowing then that heaven had spared the life of my cousin's wife. Having again met the Messrs. Browne, and learning more of you from them, and being convinced that your husband's ancestors and mine are the same, I at once



conceived the idea of uniting the two branches of the family. Monsieur Browne tells me that your daughter is an Angel, and you yourself a little less, Madame. Moreover, with the eyes of a parent, I perceive that Monsieur Tom Browne admires your beautiful Frasquita. Madame, this will not do—my son Antoine, is all a mother could wish. I send him to woo and win your daughter. He does not know of my intention, for I hear that young ladies in America are coy, and let to have more freedom than we think proper. However, I place the matter in your hands. My son sails from Havre to-morrow, consequently will be with you very soon after you receive this letter. With much respect, Madame, I am yours,

LOUIS ALEXIS PIERRE DE REGNIER,  
*Count of Regnier sur Loire.*

Madame glanced at the clock, then hastily put the portentous letter in her pocket. "Frasquita must not see this, or know anything about it. She would immediately 'go for' the young Count, as she calls it, and there would be an end to all my dreams."

However, no such calamity happened. During the class and all the afternoon Frasquita had been



as full of life and as gay as a bird. She laughed and chatted with the girls, and her gaiety made her look so lovely that one of the young ladies, as she left the class, said, "Mademoiselle looks like a Princess."

Madame had been nervous and preoccupied all the afternoon, but Frasquita was too full of spirits to notice her mother.

After the evidences of the tea had been cleared away, Frasquita, in the prettiest of blue tea gowns, sat down to read and answer the letters she had so neglected in the morning. It was her first free time at the end of a busy day.

Madame would have wished that she had put on her best dress, but, as she could give no reason for her so doing, she smothered a sigh as she noticed how lovely her child looked, and how the soft blue of the gown set off the delicate beauty of Frasquita's complexion. "Why here is a letter from Tom Browne! The skies seem to be raining foreign letters to-day—and oh! Mamma—he wants me to—"

A loud knock interrupted her sentence. "A gentleman to see Madame," said the janitor, and he



ushered in as handsome a young gentleman as eyes could hope to see.

\* \* \* \* \*

Frasquita never could be made to understand why Madame received him so composedly, or from where, as the evening wore on, she produced the fruit and cake and wine which seemed to spring up miraculously. It was only after she really had become Madame la Comtesse de Regnier sur Loire, that the old Count told the young couple the pretty ruse which had been played on them, and then they were too happy and too taken up singing "the song of love, of which the world is never weary" to care.

\* \* \* \* \*

Of their after life, only one thing will I tell you, which is, that Antoine says his wife must always have a Light Blue Tea Gown.



THE LULLABY.







## THE LULLABY.

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IT has been said that even the faults of auburn-haired people are lovable, and one would be willing to believe that there is truth in the saying after seeing Patty Marston.

Sweet Patty Marston made a lovely picture as she sat in the deep window-seat knitting, the click of her needles keeping time to a sweet lullaby of long ago, and the soft hum of the birds and the insect life out of doors making a weird accompaniment to the music of the little song.

It was half a hymn, half a lullaby,—a tender bit of music brought from the home country beyond the seas by her ancestors, and which her Father and Mother had sung to her night after night when she was a baby. It was her favorite of all the songs she knew, and so suited her sweet voice and tender,



loving heart that one would imagine that its composer had her in his mind when he wrote it.

If we look into the room we can see General Marston, Patty's father, a perfect specimen of the gentleman of colonial days. He was a man in the early fifties, but with hair as white as snow and as soft as silk, which fell in short curls around his high forehead, while the back was drawn into a cue and tied with a broad bow of black satin ribbon, Patty's special care and pride. No one could arrange it like Patty. Indeed some one had quite hurt her loving little heart by suggesting that the General's valet ought to comb his hair; and the General resented hotly that any one should strive to interfere with the loving compact made when Patty was yet but a little girl. Patty was to have the honor of combing and plaiting the beautiful white hair, and in return she was to sing the sweet lullaby the last thing every night, that the household might lie down to sleep with the thought of the thorn-crowned Jesus in their hearts.

"Patty, child, go and tell your Mother to come here—and you run off and play in the sunshine. Too much work indoors isn't good for my sweet birdling."



Patty knew well enough that this was just an excuse to get rid of her, and she was on such intimate footing with her father, that she did not fail to let him know that she saw through his solicitude for the roses on her cheeks. After a merry waste of time in happy badinage, and a final kiss "right in the eyes, to make up," she called Ponto, the handsome Irish setter, and was off into the sunshine, dancing over the smooth lawn with the faithful dog at her side, and was lost in the shade of a clump of willows which skirted the base of the hill.

The general had risen from his seat at the table and was watching her from the window she had just left. He was still lost in revery, when a white little hand was laid on his arm, and oh ! such a soft voice said :

"You want me, dear?"

It was the voice of his wife—just the voice a wife and mother should have, at the very sound of which sorrow and care take wings, and peace and comfort fill the heart.

"Mary, what do you think of this?" and he handed her a letter, saying: "Read it aloud, dear. Nothing sounds so bad when you say it, or nothing



so sweet," and the dear old man kissed the sweet mouth from which issued always words of love and cheer.

"You old flatterer! One would think you had just come from a court ball, instead of the battlefield." But all the same, a blush of happiness overspread the loving wife's face.

"Never mind the war now. We have sent the Red Coats back to old England with something besides Virginia tobacco in their pipes. This is even nearer home to us than the freedom of our country."

"Nay, nay, John, nothing can be nearer the heart of an American than the overthrow of her enemies."

"Read the letter, dear," said John.

*General John Marston.*

*Friend Marston:—*

I hear that the son of thy brother-in-arms, Wm. Jenifer, is about to visit thy part of the country, and though, as thou knowest, I, as a peaceful Friend, do not approve of wars, I glory in the result this one has brought to this country of my adoption, and I honor the men who have so nobly gained us liberty. Wm. Jenifer's son is about to visit thy part of



the country as I said above. If Billy Jenifer, Jr., wants thy daughter Patty, thou wouldst do well to give her to him.

SAMMY TOWNSEND,  
*Orthodox Member of Friends.*

The sweet voice ceased and the room was filled with a ripple of such contagious laughter that the General forgot his anxiety.

“You dear old goose of a man ! The idea of calling me away from my sweet pickles to take the knots out of such a simple skein as this.”

“But, wife dear, don’t you see, they want our birdling—that sly old fox of a Quaker has put in the opening wedge, and—”

“Tut, tut, John. Don’t fret before you have cause—and, besides, Patty is as sweet a woman as heaven ever sent on earth, and a meet match for any man.—She must marry some one, so why not Wm. Jenifer’s son ?”

“But, wife dear, she is but a child.”

“She is nearly seventeen.”

“That’s but a child’s age.”



“You did not seem to think so when you married me—I was barely fifteen when you so honored me,” and the merry little lady made the General a mock courtesy.

Soon the General heard her giving orders for the preparing of a room for the expected guest, and presently she came back and took up the knitting Patty had thrown down, and as if some charm lay in the soft wool, the click of the needles was soon keeping time to the old home music of the lullaby-hymn.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Wm. Jenifer's son, or as he was familiarly called, Billy Jenifer, to distinguish him from his father, was riding along the old turnpike on his trusty horse, Major. Horse and man were imbued with the spirit of the times, and there was an air about them that spoke of difficulties overcome, and a look of strength and vigor which even in those days when, if we can believe tradition, most men were heroes, attracted more than ordinary admiration.

Billy Jenifer wore a dark green riding coat, with collar, cuffs and pocket flaps of velvet, the whole adorned with silver buttons. His vest was of buff



chamois skin, and his breeches of light corduroy were almost hidden by the long riding boots which covered his handsome limbs. His spurs were of silver, as was also the handle of the short whip he carried in his heavily gloved hand. His hat of dark green felt was adorned with a silver cord, which, with the silken band, was held in place by a stiff silver buckle. His cue of glossy red-brown hair was tied with dark green ribbon, and when he lifted his hat a crown of soft curls revealed themselves to the eyes of his admirers—and there was no one who did not acknowledge his beauty.

His horse was as much ornamented as himself, and his valet, who rode on an equally handsome beast, was dressed in becoming livery. From the looks of the generous saddle-bags over the back of the pack horse led by the valet, one could promise one's self to see Billy Jenifer in goodly attire.

Tall, standing six feet four in his stocking feet, with broad shoulders and superb carriage, one was forced to think of some "fair god" when he entered a room. There was an easy grace and hearty, whole-souled manner about him that made him adored by



his servants, respected even by his enemies, and beloved by his friends and family.

A turn in the road brought him to a shady bit of wood, and there, seated on a rustic bench formed of two fallen boughs was, Billy Jenifer thought, the most beautiful maiden his eyes had ever gazed upon.

It was sweet Patty, of course. She had decked Ponto's collar with wild flowers, and her large garden hat was lying by her side full of ferns, grasses and flowers, of which she was weaving a garland. As she sat there, with the sunlight sifting through the swaying branches of the trees forming a fitful aureola upon her gold-crowned head, Billy Jenifer would have been willing to swear that she was a wood-nymph, coaxed from her leafy seclusion by the glory and power of the sunshine. But her quick springing to her feet dispelled the illusion, and in a moment he had dismounted, and hat in hand was inquiring the way to Marston Manor.

"You are already there, good sir. Marston Manor knows no gates, and you have for the last quarter of an hour been on its land."

"But where is the Manor?"



“A few steps more, and you can see it. This clump of trees hides it. Perhaps, sir,” she continued, “you will prefer to walk after your long ride from town?” and seeing a look of glad assent in his eyes, she turned to the valet—“Lead the horses through this next lane. A short ride will bring you to the stables. Tell the men that these are —?”

“Wm. Jenifer’s horses,” filled out the enchanted Billy. Such naïve, and yet dignified courtesy he had never beheld.

“Welcome to Marston Manor, Sir Wm. Jenifer! My Father and Mother will be charmed to receive the son of my Father’s brother-in-arms. Come with me, and in a few moments you will be at home.”

Billy regarded Patty in a dazed sort of fashion, and when they emerged into the open sunshine of the sloping lawn, the poor fellow thought he was in Heaven, for he had fallen hopelessly, idiotically in love.

Patty was tall, as was all her race, and as straight and slender as a young tree. Her hair was the tint that poets and painters love, but which defies pen or brush to describe its beauty. Her eyes were large and soft brown, and she had a way of raising them



to one's face with a pleading look which was irresistible. One would lay down one's life for sweet Patty Marston and never think of the sacrifice. Her skin was like a baby's, soft and white ; and her dimpled cheeks made one think of autumn peaches. Her mouth, which was not particularly small, had a suspicion of a pout, but when she laughed, which she did very often, being a joyous spirit, a set of even white teeth shone out like pearls.

This bright June morning, her dress was a pink lawn, made short and showing a pair of slim little feet in high heeled slippers with large silver buckles, and black silk stockings much clocked in yellow. Her bodice was drawn down in a sharp point back and front, and the sleeves, reaching only to the elbow, were puffed high on the shoulders. Over this she wore a cape of finest India linen, edged with ruffles of embroidery, and the long ends in front were tied in a coquettish bow at the waist. Her garden hat was full of flowers, and her gauntlets had been drawn off to arrange her garland, so Billy could feast his eyes undisturbed on the beauty of her face and hands.

"Father, here is the son of our old friend, Captain Jenifer, come to visit us."



“Come in, come in ! Welcome to Marston Manor !  
Come right in, come right in ! My, my ! the image  
of his father, Mary dear. Hope you are as good a  
man ! Bless my soul ! rode all this way ! Well,  
come right in, come right in ! Bless my soul !”

\* \* \* \* \*

That night Billy Jenifer for the first time in his  
life dismissed his valet with almost a curt “good  
night,” which sent that faithful dusky friend to the  
servants’ quarters with new ideas in his head.

“Guess I’ll soon have a Mis’tess as well as a  
Marsta’. Well, if she is as boo’ful as she looks, this  
yere niggah ’ll be a happy chile,” thought Bob.

Billy’s dreams were of the most confused nature.  
A wood nymph in a pink dress crowning him with  
a garland of flowers, a lovely lady and a hearty old  
man welcoming him, and pressing him to eat and  
drink ; and then a voice of such intense sweetness  
singing a sweet old hymn—

“Sweet Jesus, shield Thou my little one,”

sang the dream voice, and Billy Jenifer awoke to find  
himself on his knees. Before he rose he made a vow  
to be worthy of that sweetest of singers, Patty Marston.

\* \* \* \* \*



The Summer glided by and Autumn found Billy Jenifer still at sweet Patty's side. Often had he said, "I will leave next week, I really ought to go home," but some expedition would be gotten up, some pretty view yet to be seen, some wood still unexplored in search of ferns, and so the time went on.

It would be hard to tell who was the most deeply in love with Billy—the General, Mrs. Marston, Patty, or Ponto. As for the servants about the place, they simply fell at his feet in humble adoration.—It had been a Summer of delights for Bob, who to his dying day never tired of recounting the many incidents of "de Summa' when Marsta' was co'ting."

The General was loath to have Billy to leave, but the breath of Winter was beginning to be felt, and the time had come when Billy must start for the long homeward ride.

From the very first Patty had, with the simplicity which was one of her most graceful charms, accepted Billy's love, and returned it with all the ardor of her sweet soul; and when all was arranged with her parents, the whole family gave themselves up to the happiness which had come with this gallant suitor.



A quaint little ring very soon encircled Patty's slender finger, and when the merry girls in the neighborhood teased her, as all girls have done since the beginning of time, the dear child would blush, smile, and then almost cry ; but finally a demure little voice would say :

“It is William's ring. It belonged to his Mother, and you know she is dead. He has told me all about her, and I wear it for her sake.”

“O Patty, Patty ! what a pretty little fib ! It is all very well to talk about William's Mother, but how about Billy himself ?” cried saucy Ida Gray.

The wedding day was fixed for the first of June, the following year, and Sweet Patty promised to console herself with a letter by each stage—once in every two weeks. Now-a-days if a young lady does not hear from her beloved every day, life is made a burden to all her surroundings ; but, in the olden times Love was patient, and with patience gained trust and strength. Patty and Billy were earnest and true, and in the months to come and go before the wedding, each resolved to become more worthy of the other's love.



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Finally, one bright day in October, when the woods were glorious in their red and yellow tinted foliage, Billy and the faithful Bob, turned their backs on Marston Manor. They started off gaily, and Patty, brave to the last, rode several miles with them, and then she and the General watched them till they were lost in the distance. As the day wore on Billy's heart failed him, and he almost turned back to beg the General to allow him to marry Patty at once. But knowing the folly of such a request, he tried to console himself with the thought that he would soon be riding back with a gay cavalcade. From time to time he would sing, and when he would come to the refrain from an old French song, "The sweetest harmony is the voice of her whom I love," Bob would say, "Dat's so, Marsta' Billy, dat's so !"

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

"Sammy Townsend must have known somehow, how it was going to be," the General said to his loving wife the night after the wedding. "I never did like Quakers, and I feel as if this one had something to do with stealing our sweet birdling."



Such a wedding as it had been ! All the gentry for miles around had been there, not for the ceremony alone, but for days after while the festivities lasted. Never had such a couple been seen. When they stood up in the little private chapel of the old Manor, surrounded by their maids and gentlemen in waiting, they made such a striking picture that involuntarily the guests broke into a murmur of admiration.

Merrymaking of all kinds followed the wedding, till finally, a fortnight after, the day came when Billy was to bring his bride home. A large company came with them. The gentlemen and their valets on horseback, and the ladies and their maids in the lumbering coaches of the day. More festivities followed, and everywhere the lovely bride was greeted and received as the fitting wife of her noble and much beloved husband.

It is said that more love matches were the outcome of this famous wedding trip than from all the tournaments which had been held for years. Certain it is that Patty and Billy were kept busy going to weddings for several years, and they were always the honored guests. More than one bride blushing



confessed that seeing their happiness had induced her to listen to Tom, Jack or Dick, as the case might be. Sweet Patty would turn to her noble husband and whisper, "Ah ! William, I am so happy !"

The picture was too beautiful. Earth cannot sustain a joy so akin to the peace of Heaven—so the end came, not however, before the perfume of her loveliness had made a lasting impression on this weary old world. Should she come back to-day, she would find her influence still at work, for the deeds and words of the truly good and great never die.

It has been sung by some sweet-hearted poet—

"God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly

What He hath given ;

They live on earth, in thought and deed as truly

As in His Heaven."

Fifteen years of ideally happy wedded life had been theirs, when the birth of their sixth child sapped the strength of the still young mother. After giving the baby to her faithful old nurse Peggy who had come with her to her new home, blessing her children and bidding her beloved husband be brave, she sank to sleep, asking broken-hearted Billy to sing her the lullaby.



Poor Billy ! left with his six boys, he had to be mother and father both. No other love ever came to his heart. He lived to be an old man, and had the consolation of seeing his motherless boys grow to manhood worthy of their mother and his noble self.

Faithfully did he live up to the vow he made the first night he saw sweet Patty Marston, and when the dear Angel of Death came, he greeted him as the long-delayed messenger who was to convey him to his loved one.

Sweet Patty ! Noble Billy !

I can scarcely restrain the tears when I think of the tender tradition which has come down to us of how, after his wife's death, poor Billy sang his motherless little ones to sleep with the old lullaby-hymn :

“Sweet Jesus, shield Thou my little one.”







THE IRON CROSS.







## THE IRON CROSS.

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**I**T is late. The village clock has long since struck midnight, the fire has gone out, the candle burns low and sputters a feeble protest at being kept working so long. Still the old grandmother sews on, her poor withered hands trembling and unsteady, her eyes dimmed with tears, as well as by age. But only a few more stitches, and the warm woolen jacket will be finished. Then she can pack the box which must be ready for the field-post early in the morning, and which is for Franz, her grandson, who is away in the war with France.

What a comfort and blessing was that field-post to the hearts of the women of Germany during the anxious months of the Franco-Prussian War! And what a boon to the men amid all the horrors of war



to receive the words of love and cheer from the dear ones at home ! Ah ! many a poor fellow went to his death strengthened by the loving letter received and read just before the battle, and in the din and confusion of the conflict the words of the dear mother thrilled his heart. Lying there, dying amid the dead and wounded, a fair picture of home and mother would rise up before the death-dimmed eyes, and as he sank to that long last sleep of the soldier, whose voice was it that sang,

“Mein lieber kind, my little child !”

Heaven bless the man who first instituted the field-post—the one blessing, the one glimpse of peace amid the grim scenes of the battlefield !

At last the sewing is all done, the box packed, the letter written in which the dear old grandmother, proud of her boy, and woman-like, wishing him to prove himself worthy of honors, ends her letter with the injunction “to be sure to be true and brave, to think ever of the Fatherland, and to come home to his loving old grandmother decorated with the Iron Cross.”

Her hands trembled as she sealed the package, making sure the fastenings with red wax—for alas !



might not her brave Franz, her hope, her pride, her all, be among the slain !

“Why must there be war,” sighed the feeble, world-weary old woman. “We were so happy. But I suppose the Kaiser knows what is right.”

The tears flowing down the wrinkled, but yet kindly face of the old woman, testified to the doubt in her own humble mind as to the wisdom of the Kaiser—for was there ever a true, good woman who approved of war ?

“Could there not be some other way of settling difficulties ? Why must so much warm, young blood be poured out—so many homes made desolate ? Ah ! mein Gott ! mein Gott ! help us all, French and Germans, and send us peace !”

Love and pity filled the heart of the lowly old woman. Her mother-heart ached for all the women of both nations, and in her simple, untaught soul was solved one of the great questions of our age ; not according to the world’s code, but as it must be solved by every right-minded man and woman. She remembered that humanity links us all, that within our hearts Mercy should ever be active, that Love can conquer hatred and strife, and Forgiveness,



which possesses the blessed power of touching the secret chords of the heart and lessening the desire of revenge, will melt the hearts of our enemies, and unite us, in the Eyes of our Heavenly Father, in the sweet bonds of brotherly love.

“But my Franz will win the Iron Cross. Ah! I shall be so proud of him!” and the fear of his danger was lost in the anticipated joy of his home-coming.

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The war had ceased, and peace been declared many weeks, before Franz awoke to the realization of his position. Left for dead on the battle-field, he had been found by two tender-hearted French peasants, who on discovering that life still played within the seemingly dead body, bore him carefully to the Hospital in a small French town, where the Gray Sisters nursed all, friend or foe, alike. It was a question of souls with these holy women—not to what Nation the poor wounded body had once sworn its allegiance.

A groan of awakening consciousness brought a sweet-faced Sister quickly to his side, and her gentle, pitying “*Mon Ami*,” assured the poor bewildered fellow that he was among friends, and not a prisoner, as he at first supposed.



Question after question poured from his eager lips ; but no, the good Sister would not answer them. "Take this cool drink, and try to sleep, and then I will tell you all I know, Mon Ami."

Then seeing that his one free hand felt on his breast for something, and guessing his meaning, she added smilingly, "I have your Iron Cross safely put away. You shall have it—if you are good."

A long drawn out sigh of relief, and Franz fell off to sleep, soothed by the sweet voice of the Gray Sister. Slowly but surely life came back to the sturdy young German. When he was so far convalescent as to be able to walk around the ward a little, the Sister, after telling him as much as she knew of the youth's story, took him to the bedside of one of his countryman who was fast nearing death. There on the cot lay the slight, almost girlish figure of a youth, the yellow curls pushed back from his fair brow, the large blue eyes with the wistful look of pain mutely speaking from out their depths—one arm gone, torn from the fragile body by a bomb—the grey mist of death closing around the sweet young life ; and he alone, and so far from home.



Do men think of the consequences when they madly rush into War? Such a scene as this, oft-repeated, alas ! might well make the coldest-hearted warrior hesitate before issuing a declaration of war.

But they will tell us that war is necessary, and thus country after country is made desolate, and the voice of Rachel is heard bewailing over the beautiful earth, which God intended should be made joyous and glad by the music of the birds and of nature.

Franz and the Sister stopped by the boy's side, and Franz tenderly asked what he could do for him. Gladdened by the sound of his mother-tongue, the dying boy, for he was little more, poured out the desire of his heart. On marching off gayly to join his regiment, he had told his mother and sisters, that living or dead, he would come back to them decorated with the Iron Cross. He had served bravely, and had indeed deserved his honor, but who was there to think of him, a poor unknown peasant lad, left on the field for dead? In the thickest of the battle, when the shells were falling thick and fast, and the lines on both sides going down like wheat before the mower's sickle, he had bravely sprung forward to the side of the Colonel



of his regiment, and with his frail body had sheltered the life of his chief. He had heard the officer's cry of thanks and his promise of the Iron Cross, and then, ah ! then !—another bomb, and both officer and man fell victims to the horrors of war.

“Would you like me to write to the War Office at home and report your case ?” asked Franz, his heart melting with pity.

“Ah ! yes, and to the dear mother.”

Both letters were written and sent. The “dear mother” was coming to her boy—but the War Office—“What time had they to think of a poor lad dying in France.”

Day after day Franz saw the look of expectation in the lad's face as the mail came in, and then the hope die out, and the old pain settle down on the pinched features. It was more than he could stand. What was the Iron Cross to him ? He had life, hope, home, before him, and this poor boy had given his all, and was wearing out his heart expecting a never-to-come recognition of bravery.

“Oh ! the ingratitude of men,” thought Franz.

With the aid of the dear Gray Sister, Franz sealed up his own Iron Cross, directed it, and got one



of the kind Doctors of the Hospital to write the poor boy a letter, as if from the Bureau of War.

Franz was sitting quietly by the fast dying boy when the Sister came in with the box in her hand. Kneeling down she opened it. "At last!" he cried. "Don't read me the letter, dear Sister—only pin the cross on my breast."

A look of the sweetest peace and content stole over the pale young face.

"Mother, mother," he sighed, "I am ready to come home now. I have won my Iron Cross." With the letter in his hand, the Cross on his breast, he gave one look of love at his poor mother who had come in with the Doctor at that moment, then closed his eyes, and was dead.

\* \* \* \* \*

The humble cottage of the Grandparents was decorated with greens, gay bunches of paper flowers and flags, in honor of Franz's home-coming. The old grandfather had laid aside his working clothes and with his Iron Cross, won during the war with Napoleon I., in 1814, on his breast, and a great posey in his button-hole, he sat smiling and happy, waiting for the return of Franz. The old Grand-



mother and little Mena, Franz's twelve year old sister, had made a great feast for supper. Gretchen, Franz's betrothed, with all her young friends had gone to the station to meet the train on which he was to come back to his home and loved ones, after passing through so many and such great perils.

Presently in trooped the young people, Franz in their midst, pale and thin, with one arm still in a sling, but joyous and gay, and with Gretchen at his side. Laughter, tears, embraces, exclamations of commiseration, bursts of joy followed in rapid and confusing succession. Even comparative quiet did not reign till after supper, when they all clustered around to hear Franz tell his story of how he had been succored and nursed back to life by the French, by those whom he had thought his enemies.

Long they sat listening ; the old grandfather with his hand on Franz's knee, little Mena standing at his side, hanging on each word, and showing plainly her pride in her gallant soldier brother. Suddenly at a pause in Franz's story, the old man turned and looked at him intently.

"But where is your Iron Cross?" he asked.  
"We know that you won it."



"I haven't it any more," said Franz simply.

"You haven't it any more! Did some dog of a Frenchman steal it? or worse still, did you *lose* it?" he almost screamed.

"No, no, dear Grandfather, neither. The French are a noble, generous people, incapable of such an act—but, I haven't it any more."

The grandmother moved nearer in sympathy, and Gretchen's soft hand was laid on the poor wounded arm. He was her hero with or without a Cross, and her loving little touch told him so.

But the old man was not to be pacified.

"To win the Iron Cross, and then forfeit it! Bah! he is no grandson of mine! Go out of my house! Go!"

"But, Grandfather, wait, and I will tell you all," said Franz.

Slowly and tenderly Franz told the story of the young lad whom he had made die happy, and whose mother was so proud of his honors. Sobs from the men and women interrupted the story, but when he had finished not a sound broke the silence in the room. Little Mena had slipped out without any one noticing the child. Coming back, her face radiant with subdued feeling, pride and love, she walked



up to Franz, and with all the queenly gravity of unconscious childhood stood before him.

“The Kaiser gave Franz an Iron Cross so that he would love him,” she said. “He sent it to Heaven with the dear young soldier boy. *I* will give my Franz a golden Cross, prettier by far than an Iron Cross, which he will wear for the love of the dear King and Father who is in Heaven,” and she pinned on his breast the gold medal which had been won by her industrious little self at the parish school.

“Bravo ! Bravo, little Mena !” cried the men, and the dear child was almost smothered in embraces, while Franz, down on his knees before the old grandfather and grandmother, was asking their pardon for disappointing them, and begging their blessing.

“I could not help it, father,” he said simply.

“You are my own dear boy,” murmured the dear old grandmother. “As I have always said, God help us all ! why should there be war ! Ah ! that poor dead boy ! that poor dead boy !”

“Yes, Mena,” she said a little while after, “it was a Golden Cross our Franz won, and the dear Father in Heaven will bless him.”







# THE PRIZE CHRYSANTHEMUMS.







## THE PRIZE CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

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FIVE, six, seven! the old clock in the corner called out, and then settled back with a whizz and a bang into its creaky, hoarse, tick-tock! tick-tock!

“Two more hours, and then they will be here, mother,” said the old man.

“Yes, *only* two more hours,” said his wife.

The old man poked the fire, making the flame start up with a shower of sparks. The old lady leaned back in her chair, smiling and happy. The room was a picture of homely comfort, and these two old people looked as if they belonged to the long forgotten past. And they were indeed old, and, like most old people lived almost entirely in the recollection of the events of long ago. In one corner of the room stood a table set with quaint china and old



silver, and by the somewhat odd mixture of its accessories showing that it was laid for one of those strange meals, half a dinner, half a supper, which are only forthcoming when guests are expected at unusual hours.

The room was gay with flowers. The fresh net curtains were caught back with bright yellow ribbons, the corner-cupboard was dazzling with its display of old china mingled with bric-a-brac of the present era. Some of the furniture was the most antique of the antique, and by its side perhaps would stand a saucy wicker rocking chair decorated with pink ribbons, a screen, hand painted, or a standing lamp with silken shade. Several very old engravings hung on the walls, while on a frivolous little table in the corner stood a copy of Millet's *Angelus*, and above the upright piano, hung one of those exquisite photogravures of the sea. Such a strange commingling of past and present, and yet withal such a beautiful room, such a happy blending of coloring that the keenest lover of the artistic could not find a flaw in its arrangement. And what kind of a room do we call it? Not a parlor, surely, for there is the great open fire-place, and, shall I confess it? a great



black tea-kettle singing away as it hangs from the crane. Not a dining room, for there is no buffet, no carving tables, no array of stiff, uncomfortable leather chairs. No, there are none of these, nor could they be found within the vine-clad walls of "Cozy Corner." The parlor is on the other side of the house, but with its repellent grandeur of green rep furniture, its Body Brussels carpet, its chill air of don't intrude, if you please, we are glad to hastily shut the door and cross the passage and enter into the warmth and comfort of the living-room, where we are sure always to find dear old Uncle Mac and Aunt Lotty. Here Uncle Mac smokes his cigar, nay, sometimes a pipe, and Aunt Lotty plays with her two kittens, Whiskers and Boots, to her heart's content, when she is not busy with her never finished knitting or patchwork.

This dear old couple are simple, kindly folks, not very well educated, Miss Physical Culture would say, nor living in any style. No, they are neither. Uncle Mac is almost entirely self-taught, and when he went courting Lotty Harris, who was then the teacher in the district school, he gravely and humbly acknowledged that he had great difficulty



in reading the few periodicals which then found their way to so remote a portion of the country. But Lotty, school-mistress though she was, thought there were far worse calamities than not being a rapid reader, and was nothing loath to lay aside slate and primer and become the fair mistress of "Cozy Corner," and preceptor to Mac Kensett.

He could not have been very hard to teach, for in one corner of this bright room we find an old book-case, full of well-worn editions of authors who have long since been forgotten, with many of later date. And as for style. Well, it is true, Uncle Mac would now and then sit in his shirt sleeves, all Aunt Lotty could say never broke that bad habit, and he always wore loose, easy-fitting clothes, an old-time stock, a broad felt hat, and never any gloves. In the depths of winter he would condescend to a pair of woollen mittens of Aunt Lotty's knitting. But gloves! "Gloves are well enough for invalids and women," he said.

Aunt Lotty's costume was the never-failing plain black silk, white net shoulder cape or shawl, white lace cap trimmed with bows of narrow ribbon, and with these she wore a fine white apron. Her beauty with-



stood the changes of time, and as her life declined and Heaven drew ever more near, she grew more beautiful, with a beauty less of Earth, as the day for her entrance into Heaven approached.

Theirs has been a wonderfully happy life, though many sorrows have crossed their path, which have seemed but to draw the husband and wife nearer together. When, as one after another their little ones were taken from them, and only the one was left to brighten their stricken hearts, they knew that they had not lost their babies, that they had but gone before, that they were still really their own, and that the dear God had taken them in love, not in anger. Only one child was left them, their son Paul, and he was all that heart could desire, manly, generous and comely. But alas ! he had been married but a few years when death had come and snatched the strong man, and in a very short time his young wife, leaving two babies to the dear old grandparents. If anything could console them for this double loss, it was the companionship of these two lovely children, Paul, aged four years, and Dora, the baby.



Life began anew for Aunt Lotty, and as for Uncle Mac, he was the willing slave of these two young tyrants.

“Cozy Corner” rang with the merry shouts of happy children. Some years later, Paul, a sturdy lad, went off to college with a fine show of bravery, though he in after years acknowledged that he shed bitter tears when he was left by himself in that vast assemblage of strange faces. But he soon picked up courage and wrote home glowing letters, which were the delight of his doting grandma. As is generally the case, for love seems to be governed by opposites, Paul was his grandmother’s idol, and Dora the grandfather’s pet, though both were equally cared for by the loving hands of their second mother. As I said, Paul was a gay, sturdy lad, full of spirits and life, and while he really loved his grandparents with all the ardor of a generous, boyish heart, he found so much amusement in the companionship of his school-fellows, that he soon got over his distress at leaving home. But Dora, tender little Dora!

“Of course, she must be sent to boarding-school. How else was she to be educated?” asked the ex-school-mistress grandmother.



"True," said Uncle Mac, sadly, "but, can't we wait a little while, Mother? She is such a timid little pet."

"No, she must go, hard as it is," insisted the inflexible Aunt Lotty.

So poor little Dora's trunk was packed, and Uncle Mac, with a heart as heavy as the child's own, started off to give his precious little one to the tender care of the good Sisters at the Visitation Convent, in an adjoining State. It would be hard to tell which one felt the separation more. Uncle Mac came back a sad, listless old man, and Aunt Lotty cried all night, and for several days after. But education was the ruling spirit of her life, and it must be acquired at no matter what cost. So she dried her tears, and set to work to console Uncle Mac with the same unselfishness which had characterized her in greater sorrows.

But Dora. How was it with her? Try as she would, the dear child could not overcome her homesickness, and each week brought pathetic little letters begging to come home. She had been a trifle wayward, and had shown a spirit of childish insubordination, and that was one reason why Aunt Lotty,



with her stern good sense, insisted that the child needed the restraining influence of a large school.

“Tell Grandma,” wrote the poor child, “that I will never be naughty again, if she will only let me come home. I will feed the chickens, and weed the flower-beds, and never tease Martha and Jane any more, and really I will try and be good. I am so unhappy, that I think I will soon die, Grandpa dearest. I don’t mind in the daytime so very much, but when night comes and we all go to bed, and there is no one to kiss me good night and say “God bless you,” it nearly kills me. I cry half the night and get a scolding every morning for oversleeping myself. The girls are very nice, and I love the Sisters, but,”—here was a great blot and tear stain,—“I think I am dying. Please come for me before it is too late.”

What could Uncle Mac say to such an appeal as that? He was for starting off by the next train to rescue his darling from the hand of death, but Aunt Lotty, who was of cooler blood, advised waiting a few days.

“It is not so bad as you think, Mac dear. I know something of school children,” she said.



The old man fumed and fretted, and grew more unhappy each day. Finally, on the Saturday of the same week, there came a letter from the Superioress of the Convent, urging Dora's plea more eloquently even than herself.

"Though we are reluctant to relinquish the care of the dear child," wrote the good Sister, "I feel it my duty to urge you to take her home. We are all, both Sisters and children, devoted to Dora. A more gentle, lovable child we have never seen. But her's is a nature which demands the protecting love of home. She is visibly pining away, and I cannot conscientiously leave you in ignorance of her condition, as I fear she may go into a decline."

The next day being Sunday, nothing could be done. Uncle Mac and Aunt Lotty drove to church in the low, old-fashioned gig, which seemed just made for their old-time selves. After the service, the good country people saw the old couple standing hand-in-hand by the row of little graves, and the two large ones.

"I couldn't stand another loss, Mac," said Aunt Lotty.

The next Sunday Uncle Mac, Aunt Lotty and little Dora drove to church. Dora looked pale and thin,



and the neighbors crowded around the dear child with eager questions.

“Had she been ill? Why was she so pale and thin? What was the matter?”

The sermon that morning was on the thanksgiving we owe our Heavenly Father for the blessings He sends us. Uncle Mac sat with Dora’s soft, childish hand, clasped in his old wrinkled one. The child looked frail but happy, while over the old man’s face there was an expression of blissful content. Aunt Lotty’s keen eyes filled with tears as she looked at the two, and her thoughts soared away to that other little Dora safe in Heaven.

All this was ten or twelve years ago, and now Paul has grown to be a fine man, a promising lawyer in the city. Uncle Mac would have preferred that he had followed in his footsteps, and lived on the old place.

“But this is the age of progress, and Paul could hardly be expected to waste his talents on a farm,” argued Aunt Lotty.

“Oh! I suppose not,” answered Uncle Mac, with slight sarcasm. “He is too fine a gentlemen to be a farmer,” he added a little hastily.

“Now, *Mac*,” said Aunt Lotty.



Thanks to the modest fortune he had inherited from his parents, and the few thousands Uncle Mac gave him on his coming of age, Paul was independent of the precarious income usual to his profession when it is in the stage called "promising," and he delighted the hearts of his grandparents by marrying Gertrude Preston, the daughter of one of his father's school-fellows, a fair beautiful girl with a true, noble heart, and loving enough to satisfy even Uncle Mac's high ideal of what a woman should be. To all these good qualities was added a rare fund of good sense, and a very good education, this last adding the crowning glory to her good points, in Aunt Lotty's mind. The wedding had taken place two weeks before, and they were awaiting the arrival of the bride and groom.

And Dora? Well, Dora was still "little Dora" to the fond old grandparents, though she had grown to be a lovely young girl, full of life, well educated in spite of Aunt Lotty's fears that a governess would be a failure, unusually pretty, with a wondrous talent for music, and possessing a sweet, true voice which filled the old house with its dulcet tones, and brought joy and sunshine into the hearts of the household.



The lads of the country-side flocked around her, eager to carry off the young beauty from "Cozy Corner," and Paul's college friends, and those he brought from the city, vied with the country beaux in offering her homage. But—well, she shall speak for herself.

"Grandfather, see what Louis Van Laun has just sent me," she said, as she came in the room where the two old people were quietly waiting for the expected guests. "Such chrysanthemums, Grandpa! He has won the prize at the County Fair. Here is the certificate, and so—"

She was down on her knees before her grandfather by this time, with her head buried in his lap. The little coquette had told several of the young men who were paying her marked attention, that she would seriously consider the suit of the one whose chrysanthemums won the prize. Uncle Mac knew of this bit of coquetry, and while he was not sure that he approved of his little girl being so audacious, still he could not find it in his heart to scold,—though he talked it over gravely with Aunt Lotty.

"I knew all the time that Louis would win, so it wasn't so bad, was it, Grandpa?" came Dora's



voice from the depths of Uncle Mac's lap. Louis Van Laun followed his offering of the prize beauties ere Uncle Mac found voice to answer Dora. It was as pretty a scene as artist ever conceived. Dora, with the golden beauties in her hands, blushing and smiling, Uncle Mac tenderly grave, and Aunt Lotty tearfully, yet smilingly excited, as are all women in the presence of a love affair, and the glow from the dancing flames of the open fire lighting up the room.

Louis Van Laun stood irresolute, with an eager, questioning look on his flushed handsome face.

Just as Uncle Mac put Dora, chrysanthemums and all, in Louis' outstretched arms, old Martha opened the door with a flourish, and taking in the situation at a glance, with the inimitable, pompous air of a darkey, announced—

“De carriage is a driven' up de road, an' de *odder* bride an' groom am about to arrive.”

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Gertrude and Paul's house in the city is the perfection of a home. Ample means, guided by good taste, has arranged and furnished it simply but elegantly, and it is the delight of Gertrude's heart to



have people tell her it reminds them of "Cozy Corner." She and Paul have used every argument and wile to induce Uncle Mac and Aunt Lotty to leave "Cozy Corner" to Dora and Louis, and to come and live with them.

But no, Uncle Mac "could not get his breath in town, there were too many bricks," he said, and Aunt Lotty, well, "Dora could not possibly take care of the baby."

So Gertrude was forced to give up her wishes, but she was not to be foiled, however.

"Grandpa and Grandma should stay with her forever," she said.

After a great many mysterious visits to "Cozy Corner" from a gentleman the young people introduced as a "friend of Paul's," much letter writing, and a visit to town from Dora and Louis, it was finally decided that the whole family from "Cozy Corner" should spend the 10th of November, Paul and Gertrude's fifth, and Dora and Louis' third wedding anniversary, at Paul's house.

So they all drove to town. In one corner of the parlor stood a hastily constructed, temporary easel, mysteriously draped, and after dinner Gertrude and



Paul led the old couple up to it. Throwing back the silk, Gertrude said :

“ You would not come to live with us willingly, so see ! we have you anyhow ! ”

There stood a veritable second “ Cozy Corner ” in painting. Uncle Mac and Aunt Lotty on either side of the open fire-place, the old crane with the singing tea-kettle, the corner cupboard, the table, the various little details which were the distinctive features of the room, even the two cats drinking milk out of a saucer at Aunt Lotty’s side, as was their habit after supper each evening.—A beautiful home picture, and one which drew tears to the eyes of the dear old couple it represented.

“ Did you want us so very much, little girl ? ” asked dear old Uncle Mac tenderly, kissing Gertrude.

“ Indeed, we did, and see, now we have caught you. ”

The picture was hung with much glee, where it every day gives more pleasure to Gertrude and Paul, and all their friends. As I said, it was a double anniversary, and after the first excitement of the picture was over, Paul said teasingly :



“The picture was Gertrude’s present to me, and mine to her. What did you two give each other?”

Louis drew from his pocket a tiny package, and opening it, placed on Dora’s breast a diamond pin.

“My present to Louis is a very little one,” said sweet Dora, with tears in her eyes.

A little silver box—and what was inside?—One of the Chrysanthemums which had won Louis the prize, and his wife.



THE AFTER-GLOW.







## THE AFTER-GLOW.

AN ETCHING.

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“**T**HE stately ship with all her bravery on,” sped down towards the wide, dim, mysterious ocean. Each throb of her great engine’s heart impelled her nearer to a pall-like cloud. Like the black mantle of night it hung outspread in the eastern sky, waiting to envelope the goodly vessel within its sombre folds. The deck appeared deserted. The supper gong had sounded, and the passengers, merry and thoughtless, had answered gayly to its summons. But hidden behind the line-box stood a little group, an old man and two young girls, gazing wistfully at the fast receding shores, wrapt in the beauty of the picture before them. Off in the west lay the busy city they had but just left, its domes,



spires and buildings bathed in the glory of a wondrous sunset, and itself, from the glow, metamorphosed into a city of gold.

Rapidly the glorious sun went down behind the hills, leaving the sky and land dyed in the crimson glory which he cast around him as he sank to rest. Not a breath stirred the air. The flag and awnings of the steamer hung listless. The smoke from the ponderous smoke-stack fell like a mist, lifeless and dull.

The sea was black,—not a wave broke its calm. The glow deepened and spread. The western heavens which were full of the fleecy clouds of a mackerel sky, blazed with splendor. The dark waters caught the reflection and became as a sea of blood.

The brass of the compass-box, the fastenings and railing were as burnished, deep red copper—even the smoke now resembled a plume shaded from blood-red to faintest pink.

“It may be fancy,” said the elder girl with a far-off, exalted look on her sweet face, “but it seems to me that the Gate of Heaven has been opened, and we have been accorded a glimpse of the glory within.”

Instinctively the three drew closer together, the radiance adorning them with a nimbus of light.



“Men’s faces looking into a sunset are golden : so are our lives when they look always into the countenance of coming death,” quoted the old man dreamily.

And the stately ship sped on, away from the heavenly kiss of the after-glow, into the dark heart of the storm cloud.

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“Did you see the sunset this evening, Captain?” asked one of the gay, careless passengers later in the evening.

“Yes,” said the Captain earnestly, turning towards the east. Then in an undertone—“We shall have a hurricane at midnight.”

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The ship had

“Sailed for sunny isles,  
But never came to shore.”

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Miserere Domine !



















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